DC VOUCHER PROGRAM MOVING INTO HIGH GEAR 9 | FRIEDMAN REPORT: STATE ROUNDUP 10-11 | INTERVIEW: SOL STERN 14-15

School Reform News

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Public Education's "Broken Promise"

Leaves graduates unprepared for college and work

by George A. Clowes

The underlying promise of the nation's commitment to free K-12 education is to give everyone a shot at the American Dream by providing each child with the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to meet the demands of the adult world. The award of a high school diploma long has been viewed as marking an American youth as "ready for college and work."

That's no longer the case, according to a two-year study by the American Diploma Project (ADP), a coalition of three education policy groups: Achieve, Inc., The Education Trust, and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.

PROMISE p. 6

New Study First to Affirm Value of National Teacher Certification

by Robert Holland

For the first time since the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) came into being in 1987, a large-scale study has found teachers who win its certification "appear to be," on average, more effective than

CERTIFICATION p. 4

Denver Teachers Vote for Performance Pay

by Mike Antonucci

Members of the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA) on March 19 approved a plan that would replace the traditional salary schedule with one that pays teachers for performance, including the scores of their students on standardized tests.

The affirmative vote came after a four-year pilot project and will not go into effect unless Denver voters approve a $25 million property tax hike to pay for it in November 2005. The DCTA leadership

DENVER p. 8

Study: Texas Must Focus on Productivity

by Krista Kafer

A new study by the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) challenges assertions that poor student achievement in Texas is the result of inadequate funding and that higher taxes are the best way to improve achievement.

The Texas legislature is considering proposals for changing the state's education funding system. Any new system of taxation, the TPPF authors contend, should preserve local control and promote parental choice.

The education funding system in Texas is known as "Robin Hood" because it requires wealthier school districts to share property tax receipts with poorer districts. According to the February 2004 TPPF study, "Effective, Efficient, Fair: Paying for Public Education in Texas," the adverse effects of most of the tax change proposals are unlikely to be outweighed by benefits from increased funding to education.

"The current tax system is sufficiently flexible and provides adequate revenue growth for public schools," conclude the study's authors, Ohio University economics professor Richard Vedder and Buckeye Institute Research Director Joshua Hall. "Education spending and education productivity are the real problems that challenge Texas."

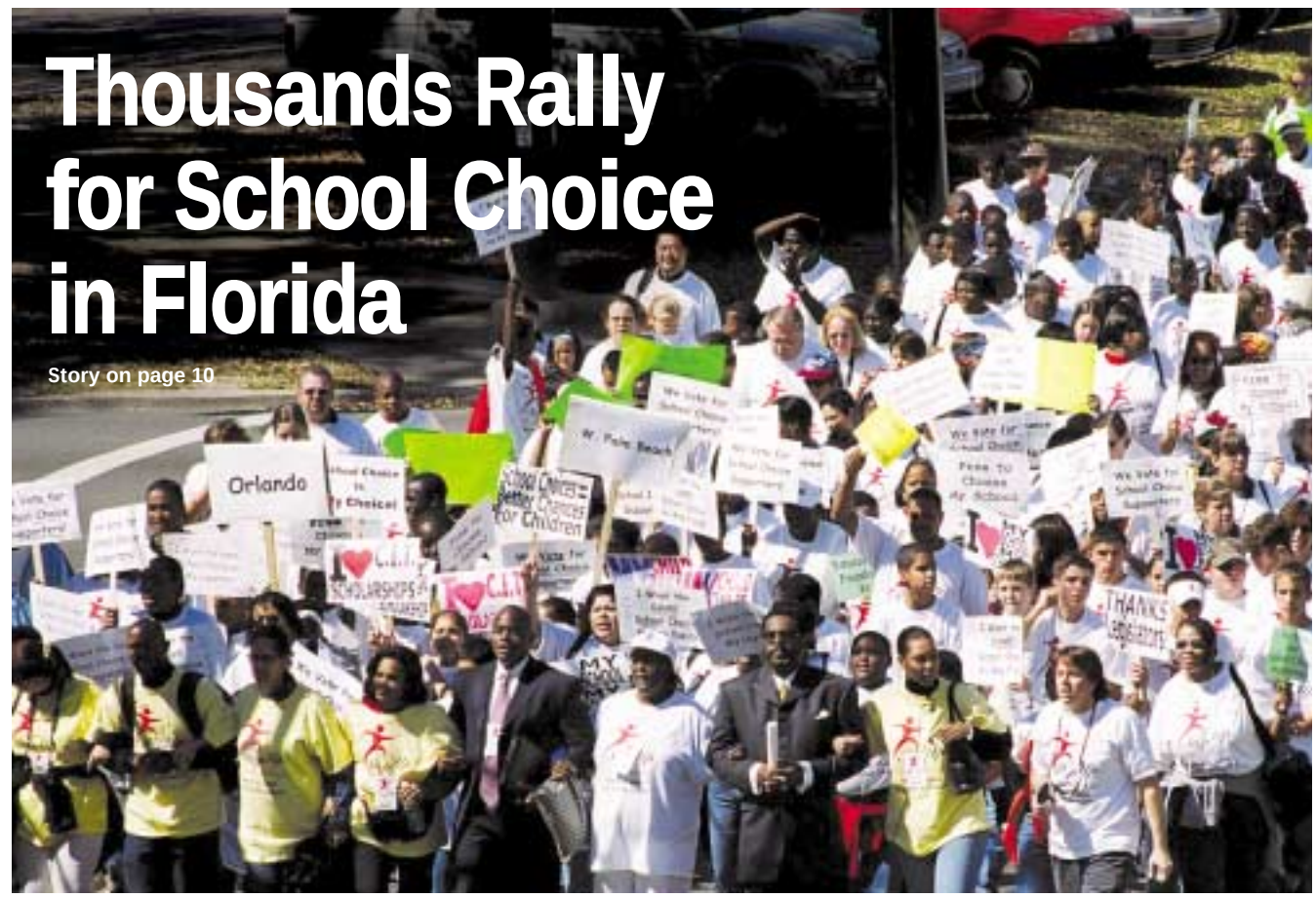
Some Texas districts already have relatively high productivity: They have higher than average achievement and lower than average spending. The study identifies the 15 most efficient districts in the state.

The Texhoma Independent School

TEXAS p. 16

Thousands Rally for School Choice in Florida

Story on page 10



Step Up for Students

A record 3,000 supporters of Florida's Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program march through downtown Tallahassee to rally on the Capitol steps on March 9 to support educational opportunities for low-income families. Leading the marchers is Bishop Harold Ray, founder of Redemptive Life Academy in West Palm Beach.

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As DC Vouchers Move Ahead, More Rumblings and Grumblings on NCLB

KRT

House Education Committee Chairman John Boehner (R-Ohio) told the *New York Times* the proposed changes to NCLB would make it easier for states to go back to hiding the fact that some children are being denied a quality education.

by Don Soifer

At a March 24 event, Washington DC Mayor Anthony Williams and U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige announced the selection of the Washington Scholarship Fund as the entity that would administer the new voucher program for the District of Columbia.

The DC Choice Incentive Project, approved by Congress and signed by President George W. Bush last year, is a five-year federally funded program to provide vouchers of up to $7,500 for approximately 2,000 low-income students in the District. With the vouchers, students will be able to attend the participating private school of their choice.

A grant also was awarded to undertake the first phase of the program evaluation, which will be conducted by Westat, working with Georgetown University researchers. As part of the grant, the team will assist in the lottery to assign scholarships randomly to eligible student applicants.

Paige Answers School Officials on NCLB

In a March 24 letter to Paige, 14 state school officers strongly criticized the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), proposing a major overhaul of the law's accountability mechanisms. The officials represented Alaska, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Idaho, Louisiana, Maine, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Utah, and Washington.

"We propose a set of broad guidelines that would at once address the need for statewide accountability and still accord states true flexibility in how they meet federal requirements," the letter stated.

Congressional leaders who championed the law, including House Education Committee Chairman John Boehner (R-Ohio) and ranking Democrat George Miller (D-California), responded swiftly and with vigor.

"These changes would gut NCLB and make it easier for states to go back to hiding the fact that some children are being denied a quality education even as those states accept billions in increased federal funds," Boehner told the *New York Times*.

"When we empower parents, we do good things for children. It is that beautifully simple."

REPRESENTATIVE TRENT FRANKS (R-ARIZONA)

"They are always sort of arriving but they never get there," said Miller in the same *Times* article. "We want all of our fourth-grade children to be proficient in reading and math and other subjects."

A few days before the letter from the school chiefs was released, a memo from Paige to editorial writers addressed recent criticisms of the law. The memo discussed how federal officials have made it a priority to communicate regularly with state leaders and to maximize flexibility when it comes to compliance.

"Some states decided to use more elements of flexibility than others, but, consistent with the principles of federalism and flexibility that characterize NCLB, each state presented a unique plan and rationale for that plan," Paige explained.

The memo also pointed out that numerous analyses, including studies by the General Accounting Office and Harvard University researchers, had concluded Congress had allocated ample funds to implement the law's testing and accountability requirements.

Special Order Promotes Choice

Two of Congress's leading school choice advocates took to the House floor March 18 with a Special Order promoting the benefits of choice. Representative Pete Hoekstra (R-Michigan), chairman of the House Select Education Subcommittee, joined Representative Trent Franks (R-Arizona) to discuss choice in general and Franks' federal tuition tax credit proposal, called the Children's Hope Act.

"A tax credit would begin to bring a little bit of balance," Hoekstra explained, "that says, 'rather than putting more money into empowering bureaucrats, we are going to put some money into empowering parents and rebridging that gap between parents and local schools and their children.'"

Added Franks, "When we empower parents, we do good things for children. It is that beautifully simple."

Reaction to Secretary's Remarks Linger

In late February, the wave of criticism over Paige's comparison of the National Education Association (NEA) to a "terrorist organization" continued to linger. Despite apologies from the Secretary, at least two organizations known for their criticism of the Bush administration launched online positions encouraging Paige's ouster.

In a *Washington Post* column shortly after the remarks, Paige was clear to point out that the NEA leadership, not teachers, was his intended target.

"As ill-considered as my words were, my disappointment was directed only—and I mean only—at the union heads in Washington who have been opposing any and all educational reforms, no matter what the consequence to our children," Paige said in that article.

A February 24 editorial by the *Wall Street Journal* suggested Paige's frustration at the NEA's hardball legislative tactics, "to preserve their monopoly on public education," was not altogether unfounded.

"So far as the NEA is concerned," the editorial went on to say, "the real outrage is the Bush administration's attempt to introduce accountability in public education through the No Child Left Behind Act."

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Certification

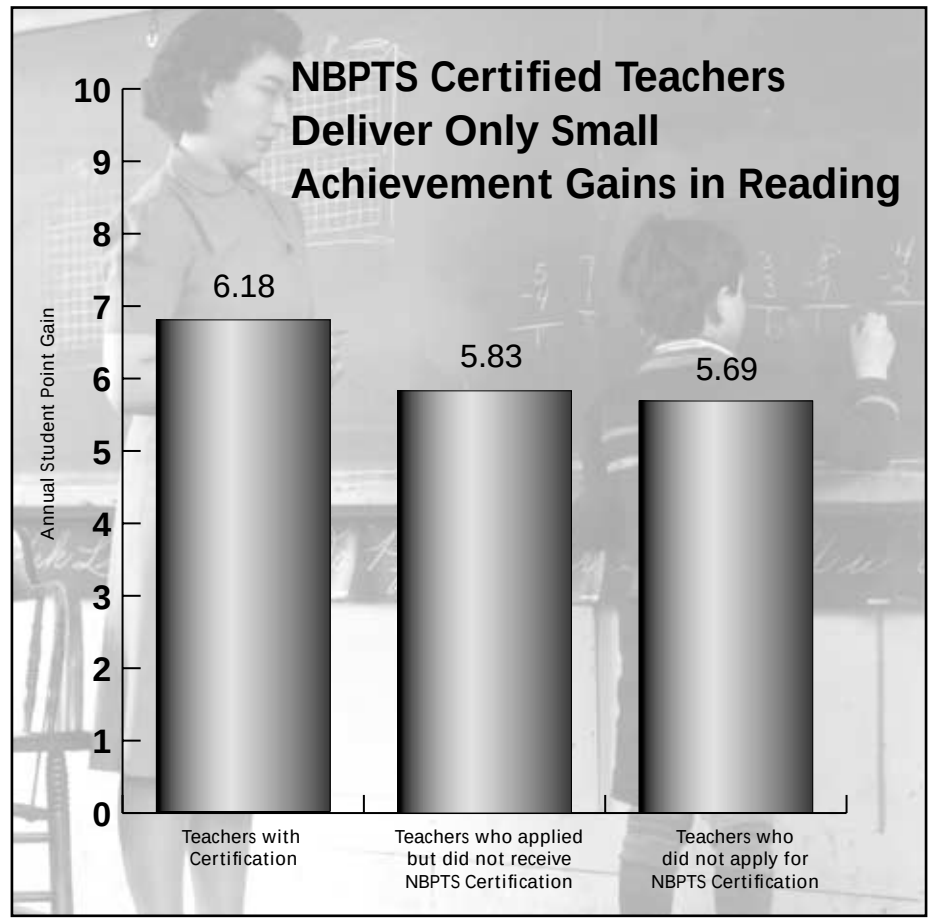
Continued from page 1

their non-certified colleagues.

The differences between nationally certified and non-certified teachers, based on "value-added" assessment of their impact on student achievement, were small, but statistically significant.

NBPTS officials and advocates quickly claimed the results prove their national certification system works. Former Georgia Governor Roy Barnes, the current NBPTS chairman, said the study showed the National Board is "the gold standard" in assessing teachers. "The study provides state and national policymakers with proof that National Board Certification is a smart investment," he said.

But a host of analysts and critics—and even the study's authors—said the data fall far short of proving NBPTS is a cost-effective way of identifying excellent teachers. Moreover, they note NBPTS certification does nothing to ensure that the best teachers get into schools where they are most desperately needed, and stay there. Nor does the study show there is anything about the certification process itself that improves teachers.



Student Achievement Gains

Titled "Can Teacher Quality Be Effectively Assessed?" the Urban Institute study by Dan Goldhaber and Emily Anthony examined more than 600,000 achievement records of grades 3-5 pupils in North Carolina from 1996 to 1999. North Carolina has 6,641 NBPTS-certified teachers, the most in the nation. The state gives NBPTS-certified teachers a 12 percent premium above the base salary scale, which amounts to an average $4,000 annual bonus.

With respect to student achievement, based on averages, the study found:

- Teachers who did not apply for NBPTS certification had student achievement gains of 9.75 points per year in math and 5.69 points in reading.
- Teachers who applied but were unsuccessful showed student achievement gains of 9.14 points in math and 5.83 points in reading.
- Teachers who applied for and won NBPTS approval recorded student achievement gains of 10.21 points in math and 6.18 points in reading.

"These differences, nonetheless, are relatively small; the largest differential is in math between certified and non-certified teacher applicants, at just over a point on the exam or roughly 14 percent of a standard deviation in the growth in math scores," the study explained.

"North Carolina could save $35 million by omitting the costly and time-consuming NBPTS assessment and simply rewarding teachers on the basis of a value-added analysis of their student test scores, [Professor John] Stone contended."

Schools May Be Worse Off

While documenting this small positive result, Goldhaber and Anthony acknowledged the large expense of NBPTS: some $350 million in subsidies, excluding the bonuses North Carolina and many other states pay teachers who win the certification after a process largely consisting of self-documenting their teaching style. Is that level of investment worthwhile? The authors said it depends on the subsequent career paths of the National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs), as well as the impact of teachers using so much time to try to gain the certification.

"Our findings suggest that schools with many unsuccessful applicants or those with successful applicants that leave following their certification may actually be worse off for having had their teachers apply to the program, since NBCTs are no more (or less) effective than non-applicants in the year of application and unsuccessful applicants are less effective in the year of application. Teaching assignment also matters, as schools with NBCTs receive substantially more educational benefits from having their NBCTs teach low-income students in earlier grades."

Because the study did not show that anything about the certification process itself makes teachers more effective, any economic benefit of identifying NBCTs would depend partly on whether the certification prolongs their stay in teaching, which is unknown. Even assuming that winning the status did lengthen the stay of NBCTs, the cost-effectiveness of identifying them would be less than another vaunted educational intervention that also carries a high price tag, and the net results of which are in dispute: reducing class size.

The National Education Association, the nation's largest teacher union, joined NBPTS in hailing the results, despite the Urban Institute study's use of student test scores as a measure of teacher effectiveness. Both the NEA and NBPTS have steadfastly argued against the use of standardized test results as an indicator of teacher quality.

Professor John Stone, the Education Consumers Clearinghouse founder whose 2002 study of Tennessee's NBPTS-certified teachers found no evidence they are "exceptionally effective," said "what the Urban Institute study really demonstrated is that 'value-added' statistical analysis can identify the highest-performing teachers with far more accuracy and far less cost than the NBPTS certification process."

North Carolina could save $35 million by omitting the costly and time-consuming NBPTS assessment and simply rewarding teachers on the basis of a value-added analysis of their student test scores, Stone contended.

Teachers Not Exceptional

A key difference exists between Stone's 2002 study and the current report by the Urban Institute. Stone examined the small number of NBCTs in Tennessee to determine whether any of them would qualify as exceptional teachers using a value-added yardstick under the terms of a teacher awards program currently used in Chattanooga. None did.

The Urban Institute study compared hundreds of NBCTs in North Carolina to determine whether they produced higher achievement gains than the thousands of North Carolina teachers who are not certified by the National Board. They did, but just barely.

The difference between NBPTS-certified and non-certified teachers in North Carolina was so small that few, if any, of the North Carolina NBCTs would have qualified for the Chattanooga award—an award that has been earned by several teachers working in Chattanooga's low-income, lowest-achieving schools.

To put the Urban Institute findings in perspective, Stone suggested policymakers use the widely known 1996 Sanders and Rivers study as a guide to what truly exceptional teachers are able to do. It found students taught by the top 20 percent of teachers for three consecutive years made substantially higher achievement gains than ones taught by teachers in the bottom 20 percent.

Although differences between the two studies prevent direct comparison, less than 25 percent of the achievement gains produced by North Carolina's NBPTS-certified teachers would be in the top 20 percent of the gains produced by non-certified teachers. In other words, the NBPTS-certified teachers produced very little additional achievement over that produced by most other teachers.

The other 75 percent of the gains produced by NBPTS-certified teachers would fall below the 80th percentile, and two-thirds of these gains would fall below the average achievement gains produced by all non-NBPTS-certified teachers. In other words, rather than being an elite group, NBCTs are not much different from other teachers.

"Is this level of teaching what policymakers intend to reward?" Stone asked. "I think not."

The Urban Institute study was the first of a series expected to be released following widespread criticism that NBPTS is making little difference in boosting student achievement after 17 years of government and foundation support.

"The differences between nationally certified and non-certified teachers, based on 'value-added' assessment of their impact on student achievement, were small, but statistically significant."

Several states are re-evaluating whether giving bonuses for NBPTS certification is a wise use of taxpayer money.

Robert Holland is a senior fellow at the Lexington Institute, a public policy think tank in Arlington, Virginia. His email address is **holland@lexingtoninstitute.org**.

INTERNET INFO

The March 5, 2004 Urban Institute study by Dan Goldhaber and Emily Anthony, "Can Teacher Quality Be Effectively Assessed?" is available online at **http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410958_NBPTSOutcomes.pdf**.

The statement by J.E. Stone regarding the Goldhaber/Anthony study, "National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS): Improving Education at a Snail's Pace," is available online at **http://www.education-consumers.com/Urban_Inst1.asp**.

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Arizona Charter School Students Start Lower but Finish Higher

by Vicki Murray

One might describe the national charter school movement as one step forward, two steps back.

One step forward: Washington state just became the 41st state to enact charter legislation. (Washington DC has such legislation as well.)

Two steps back: Opponents in Massachusetts—where 13,000 children are on waiting lists to enroll in charter schools—nevertheless want a moratorium on charters. Alabama recently defeated charter legislation, claiming charter schools are "unproven experiments."

In Arizona, however, a steady pace is winning the race. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the state's charter school law. Today, 491 charter schools educate nearly 10 percent of Arizona's students, with most parents consistently giving their children's charter schools an "A" or "A+." A new study by the Goldwater Institute suggests those grades are well deserved.

The study finds charter school students typically begin with lower test scores than their counterparts in traditional public schools, showing charters don't simply "cream" the better students. Despite this initial deficit, charter school students show higher overall annual achievement growth. Charter students who completed the 12th grade surpass traditional public school students on SAT-9 Reading tests.

Arizona charter schools do more with less, since they receive only 80 percent of traditional public school per-pupil funds.

The Goldwater study, "Comparison of Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools on Retention, School Switching, and Achievement Growth," examines nearly 158,000 SAT-9 Reading test scores of more than 60,000 students attending 873 charter and traditional public schools statewide over a three-year period.

The study also finds achievement growth varies by grade level. In the elementary grades, charter school students exhibited faster achievement growth than traditional public school students. Achievement growth in the middle grades is similar for both kinds of students, while high school achievement growth is higher for traditional public school students.

The authors of the study, Lewis C. Solmon of Human Resources Policy Corporation and Pete Goldschmidt of UCLA's Center for the Study of Evaluation, suggest the faster achievement growth in the early years is because elementary charters are more likely to focus on academics. Middle and high school charters, by contrast, generally serve students seeking vocational training, who have been out of school, who are struggling with learning or behavioral problems, or who have been in the juvenile justice system. That means charters are reaching at-risk students "who might otherwise have slipped through the cracks," explain the authors.

Arizona's charter law encourages such educational options. Arizona does not cap the number of charter schools that can open, and it allows multiple charter authorizers: local school districts, the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, and the Arizona Department of Education.

Having multiple authorizers helps prevent the process from becoming politicized and prevents any one group from becoming too powerful. With a simple application process that is easy to navigate, educators are free to start schools in their communities where the need is greatest. Parents, teachers, and school personnel open roughly 70 percent of Arizona's charter schools.

Even Penny Kotterman, president of the Arizona Education Association, admits charter schools have excelled at serving "niche groups," students in alternative education, or those at risk of dropping out.

"I think we've come to a peaceful coexistence in most cases," she said.

How do traditional public schools respond to charter school competition? Recent findings from Harvard University economist Caroline Hoxby show "charter competition induced [Arizona's] public schools to improve their productivity and achievement ... relative to the schools' own past performance and relative to gains made, over the same period, by schools that were not subjected to charter competition." Overall, traditional public schools facing even modest charter competition raised their annual improvement on NAEP scores by 1.4 percentile points in fourth-grade reading and math, without spending a penny more.

"[In Arizona], 491 charter schools educate nearly 10 percent of Arizona's students, with most parents consistently giving their children's charter schools an 'A' or 'A+.' A new study by the Goldwater Institute suggests those grades are well deserved."

Vicki Murray, Ph.D., is an education analyst at the Goldwater Institute in Phoenix, Arizona. Her email address is **vmurray@goldwaterinstitute.org**.

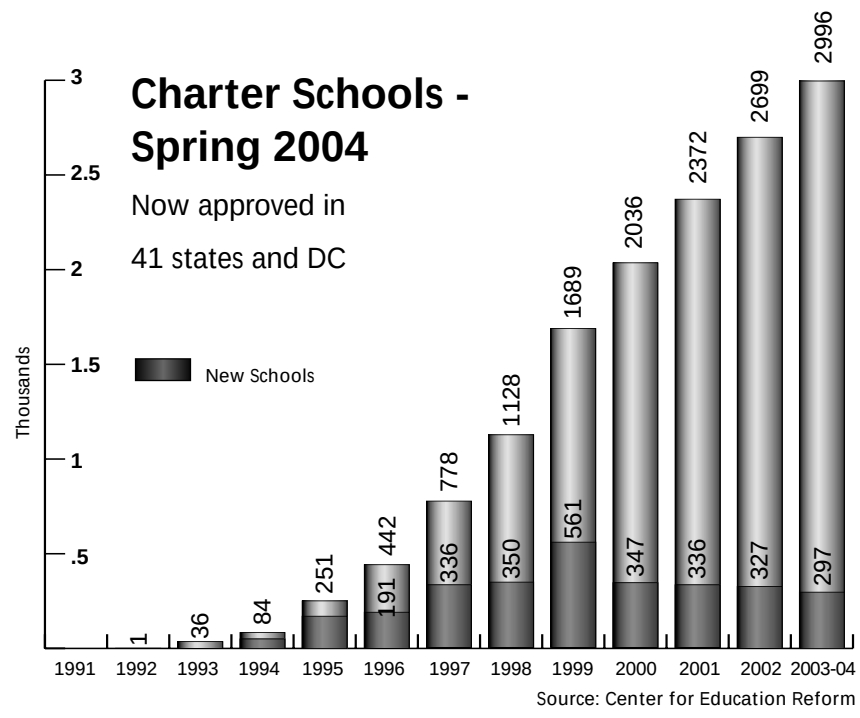
Other Charter School News

3,000 Charters Proves a Hard Nut to Crack

In the fall of 1998, when he signed a bill to encourage states to open more charter schools, then-President Bill Clinton confidently predicted the U.S. would have 3,000 charter schools by the year 2000. But it's 2004 already, and the U.S. still doesn't have 3,000 charter schools.

According to figures reported by the Center for Education Reform, there are 2,996 charter schools operating in the 2003-04 school year, up 297 from the previous year's figure of 2,699. As shown in the accompanying figure, the annual increase in the number of charter schools has been dropping since 1999-2000, and this year's annual increase is the lowest since 1996-97.

In February, the Center for Education Reform published the 2004 edition of "Charter School Laws Across the States," which provides a comparative analysis and ranking of each state's charter school law. The report is available for purchase through the Center's Web site at **http://www.edreform.com**.



Source: Center for Education Reform

Washington Finally Gets a Charter School Law

After a decade of effort by citizens and legislators, Governor Gary Locke on March 18 signed into law a charter school bill for Washington State that would permit the creation of 45 charter schools over the next six years. The bill was passed by a vote of 651-46 in the Democrat-controlled House and 27-22 in the Republican-controlled Senate.

"Even though it's only a modest bill and will create only a handful of new charter schools, some of these schools will prove that you can do it better with any amount of money by giving educators more freedom," charter school advocate Jim Spady told the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. Spady and his wife Fawn are co-directors of the Education Excellence Coalition, which has campaigned for charters since 1994.

The campaign for charters still isn't over. A week after Locke signed the bill, the state's largest teacher union committed itself to overturning the new law. The Washington Education Association voted to collect almost 100,000 signatures for a November ballot initiative to reject charter schools. If the signatures are collected by June 9, the creation of charter schools will be put on hold until after the November vote.

Weir Agenst Charta Skuls

Apparently encouraged by school officials, public high school students in Marlboro, Massachusetts wrote to state Board of Education members to try to persuade them to vote against awarding a charter to the proposed Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter School in their community. But the letters were so badly written—with missing punctuation and incorrect spelling of words like "school"—that the plan backfired.

"If I didn't think a charter school was necessary, these letters have convinced me the high school was not doing an adequate job in teaching English language arts," board member Roberta Schaefer told the *Boston Herald*.

The charter school application was approved.

— *G.C.*

INTERNET INFO

The March 15, 2004 Goldwater Institute study by Lewis C. Solmon and Pete Goldschmidt, "Comparison of Traditional Public Schools and Charter Schools on Retention, School Switching, and Achievement Growth," is available online at **http://www.goldwaterinstitute.org/pdf/materials/431.pdf**.

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Promise

Continued from page 1

"For too many graduates, the American high school diploma signifies only a broken promise," the report declares in its opening paragraph. "While students and their parents may still believe that the diploma reflects adequate preparation for the intellectual demands of adult life, in reality it falls far short of this common sense goal."

The report, titled "Ready or Not: Creating a High School Diploma that Counts," focuses on those students who successfully earn high school diplomas and go on to seek employment in the workplace or pursue a college degree. Their high school success appears somewhat counterfeit when the report reveals employers and postsecondary institutions regard a high school diploma "as little more than a certificate of attendance," not intellectual attainment.

The three ADP sponsors call for anchoring high school graduation requirements to the knowledge and skills that colleges and employers say is needed for young people to succeed in their institutions. To help make that happen, the ADP partnership worked for two years with high school teachers, college professors, and employers to develop a set of benchmarks to describe that knowledge and skill set for English and mathematics. The benchmarks are part of the report.

"When all kids get the same, rigorous high school curriculum, we know that poor and minority students can more than hold their own in college," said Education Trust Director Kati Haycock. "Through ADP, we now know just as definitively what it would take for graduates to compete in higher education and in good jobs, and it's intolerable we would offer them less and consign them to dead-end futures."

The devaluation of the high school diploma starts with state graduation requirements, the report suggests. Most states require high school students to take a certain number of English and mathematics courses, rather than specifying content to be covered, such as algebra I, algebra II, and geometry. As a result, there's no incentive for students to take challenging courses. Even high school exit exams provide little added incentive for students to take more rigorous courses: At best, the exit tests assess only eighth- or ninth-grade content.

"People who grouse about high-school exit tests are voicing the wrong objection. What should spark real dismay is the gap between what states expect of graduates and what the real world demands for their success."

CHESTER E. FINN, JR.

"People who grouse about high-school exit tests are voicing the wrong objection," said Fordham Foundation President Chester E. Finn, Jr. "What should spark real dismay is the gap between what states expect of graduates and what the real world demands for their success."

With such weak content requirements in high school, it's not surprising the average high school graduate lacks the more advanced knowledge and skills required in the workplace and in college. Yet instruction in elementary school appears to be lacking, too, because most employers say high school graduates lack even *basic* skills. For example, a Public Agenda poll reported 60 percent of employers rate graduates' skills as only "fair" or "poor" in grammar, spelling, writing, and basic math.

Although the vast majority of high school graduates—more than 70 percent—are accepted by two- and four-year colleges, more than half (53 percent) must take at least one remedial English or math class at some time during their college career. More than one-quarter (28 percent) must take remedial English or math as soon as they enter college.

Not surprisingly, the less prepared students are for college-level work, the less likely they are to graduate with a college degree. Overall, fewer than half of the high school graduates who enter college leave with a degree. Of those who have to take one remedial class, only 45 percent leave with a degree; of those who take three or more remedial classes, including reading, only 18 percent leave with a degree.

Several years ago, Public Agenda conducted a survey that showed a marked disconnect between what professors in teacher colleges thought was important and what employers and parents considered important. One way of reducing that disconnect would be to provide educators with a better idea of typical real-world tasks in today's job market. The ADP report does this in an informative section on "Workplace Tasks and Postsecondary Assignments."

The 30-page section provides numerous examples of actual job duties and assignments to illustrate the practical application of the competencies described in the report's benchmarks. Broad distribution of this section of the report among educators would do much to dispel the unfamiliarity most of them have about the knowledge and skills required in today's workplace.

George A. Clowes is managing editor of School Reform News. *His email address is* **clowes@heartland.org**.

INTERNET INFO

The February 2004 report from the American Diploma Project, "Ready or Not: Creating a High School Diploma that Counts," is available at the Web site of Achieve, Inc. at **http://www.achieve.org**, together with other ADP materials.

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Let's Put Parents Back in Charge!

A GUIDE FOR SCHOOL REFORMERS

by Joseph L. Bast & Herbert J. Walberg, Ph.D.

At its root, the campaign for parental choice in education is about relying on *capitalism* to educate our children. Opponents demonize parental choice in education by tapping the public's confusion about competition, profits, and prices. The anti-choice campaign is really a thinly veiled anti-capitalism campaign. To counter this, we must educate millions of Americans about what capitalism is, how it works, and why it should be trusted in education.

Joseph Bast and Herb Walberg, president and chairman, respectively, of The Heartland Institute, make the case for parental choice in education by explaining and defending capitalism. *Let's Put Parents Back in Charge!* is the first effort to join these two subjects in one book since Milton Friedman proposed vouchers in *Capitalism and Freedom* in 1962.

To order, call The Heartland Institute at 312/377-4000, or visit Heartland's online store at **http://www.heartland.org**.

The Heartland INSTITUTE

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Inside and Outside:

School Choice from Two Perspectives

review by Jonathan Butcher

As a former teacher and now resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, Frederick Hess has spent time both inside and outside the public education machine—teaching students in the classroom, and developing education policy in a think tank.

In his new book, *Common Sense School Reform* (Palgrave Macmillan, April 2004) Hess uses his dual perspective to argue that educators and reformers must be willing to trade ideal designs for pragmatism for the benefit of the children. Frequently, institutional solutions prescribed by analyst-reformers are dismissed by educators as not workable in their present circumstances. As the adults arm-wrestle over reforms, the children slip through the cracks of the existing system.

Common Sense begins by dividing those involved in education into two camps: commonsense reformers and status quo reformers. The former group "does not claim that competition is costless, only that—when sensibly monitored and paired with tough-minded accountability—its benefits will significantly outweigh its costs." Of the latter, he says they "are all for reform so long as it changes nothing of consequence." It is these status quo reformers who pose a threat to students.

"The commonsense challenge," writes Hess, "is to drive systemwide improvement."

After establishing who the players are, Hess elaborates on what is needed to change the system: accountability, competition, and quality teachers. Teachers must be held accountable for student performance, principals for teacher success, and schools for both. The weakest links in the chain of responsibility must be identified and replaced—even if that means closing down persistently under-performing schools.

From accountability, Hess moves to competition, arguing in favor of choice-based reforms without apologizing for them. He sees reform through the eyes of a former teacher, and he asserts choice will succeed only if correctly designed—acknowledging the costs of change but not retreating from hard-nosed reform.

"To be blunt, competition works when it hurts," he writes.

It is not enough simply to add a charter school law, Hess contends. Public schools must feel the financial pinch when students leave. Teachers, principals, administrators, and school boards must face the consequences—positive or negative—for the performance of their school, and the consequences must motivate them to look closely at what they do and doggedly work at doing it better.

Of course, there will be resistance.

"In any line of work, most employees will resist changes that hold them newly accountable, force them to change routines, or threaten their jobs or wages," writes Hess. "The way we overcome this resistance is not by pleasing but by making action less painful than inaction."

Since teachers are "the most important factor in determining school quality," Hess argues teacher pay, performance reviews, and promotions should be based on student achievement. He strongly supports merit pay arrangements similar to "broad 'pay bands' of the kind long utilized in the private sector and favored in civil service reform."

"Moving to a more flexible system of hiring, firing, and paying teachers is part and parcel of moving to an emphasis on accountability and competition," he writes.

Common Sense School Reform is unique in school reform literature in that it not only outlines the need for choice-based reform but also acknowledges the stresses such reforms place on educators. However, Hess does not let the prospect of administrative headaches excuse educators from school choice's consequences.

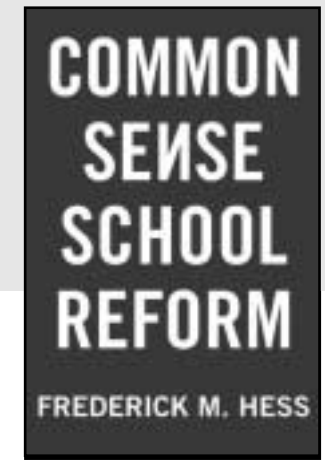
Chapter by chapter, Hess keeps returning from his ideas of systemwide reform to the fundamental purpose of schooling: educating children. While describing the validity of school leaders' objections to competition—almost to the point of sympathizing with them—Hess skillfully points out inconsistencies and inefficient mechanisms that are inexcusable within the present system of public schooling.

Hess's tone in this book is so reasonable and his arguments so tactful that even staunch opponents of school choice could find themselves reevaluating their position.

Jonathan Butcher is a research assistant in domestic policy at The Heritage Foundation. His email address is **jonathan.butcher@heritage.org**.

Common Sense School Reform

by Frederick M. Hess
(April 2004, Palgrave Macmillan; hardcover, 272 pages, $26.95, ISBN 1403963533)



"[S]tatus quo reformers ... 'are all for reform so long as it changes nothing of consequence.'"

FREDERICK HESS

The Economics of Teacher Quality

by Lisa Snell

"Bad money drives out good."

Gresham's Law

As a result of unionization, pay differentials between high-aptitude and low-aptitude teachers have disappeared over the past 50 years. According to a new study, one unfortunate consequence of this pay compression has been to push high-aptitude teachers out of the teaching profession.

The researchers, Caroline M. Hoxby and Andrew Leigh, both of Harvard University, were troubled by evidence reported in 2002 by another researcher, University of Maryland economics professor Sean P. Corcoran, that the percentage of high-aptitude women in teaching had declined significantly. Corcoran found the likelihood that a female from the top of her high school class would eventually enter teaching had fallen dramatically from 1964 to 1992—from almost 20 percent to 4 percent—while the percentage of women in the profession had stayed steady at around 75 percent.

In their recent paper, "Pulled Away or Pushed Out? Explaining the Decline of Teacher Aptitude in the United States," Hoxby and Leigh explain how they tested two possible hypotheses for having fewer high-aptitude women in teaching:

- the "pull" of getting better pay for higher aptitude in other professions; and
- the "push" of getting no better pay for higher aptitude in teaching ("wage compression").

When they began their study, the Harvard researchers expected the "pull" hypothesis would explain most of the decline in teachers' aptitude. They were wrong.

"The evidence suggests that compression of teaching wages is responsible for about three-quarters of the decline in teacher aptitude," they concluded. "Females' opportunities in alternative occupations do matter, but opportunities improved rather similarly for females of all aptitudes."

Teacher quality also concerned The Teaching Commission, which released its report, "Teaching at Risk: A Call to Action," in January 2004. Established by former IBM chairman Louis V. Gerstner, Jr., the high-profile commission said its aim was "to break the cycle in which low-performing college students far too often become the teachers of low-performing students in public schools." College graduates whose SAT and ACT scores are in the bottom quartile are more than twice as likely as those in the top quartile to major in education.

The commission report argues the nation must increase base pay for teachers and that teachers must be measured and compensated based on their classroom performance, with substantial increases for teachers who raise student achievement. (See "Gerstner Commission Endorses Teacher Merit Pay," *School Reform News*, April 2004.)

A specific example of The Teaching Commission's influence can be seen in Schools Chancellor Joel Klein's recent call for changing the way teachers are paid in New York City. Klein proposed teacher bonuses based on student achievement and higher salaries for teachers who work in troubled schools or difficult-to-staff fields like math and science.

"Lockstep pay, seniority, and life tenure" are the heart of the problem, said Klein in a January 2004 speech, sponsored by *Crain's New York*. "Together they act as handcuffs and prevent us from making the changes that will encourage and support excellence."

Lisa Snell is director of the education program for the Reason Foundation in Los Angeles. Her email address is **lsnell@reason.org**.

INTERNET INFO

Caroline M. Hoxby and Andrew Leigh's December 2003 paper, "Pulled Away or Pushed Out? Explaining the Decline of Teacher Aptitude in the United States," is available online at **http://post.economics.harvard.edu/faculty/hoxby/papers/hoxbyleigh_pulledaway.pdf**.

The August 2002 paper by Sean P. Corcoran, William N. Evans, and Robert S. Schwab, "Changing Labor Market Opportunities for Women and the Quality of Teachers 1957-1992," is available online at **http://www.bsos.umd.edu/econ/evans/wpapers/corcoran_evans_schwab_teachers.pdf**.

The January 2004 report of The Teaching Commission, "Teaching at Risk: A Call to Action," is available online at **http://www.theteachingcommission.org/publications/FINAL_Report.pdf**.

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Denver

Continued from page 1

supported the plan, despite the fact that NEA's national policy, adopted in 2000, declares performance pay systems to be "inappropriate."

NEA's stance didn't deter DCTA.

"I don't open my NEA book every morning to see what I can and cannot do," said DCTA President Becky Wissink.

Whether the plan succeeds or fails may depend less on the plan itself and more on its method of adoption. There are approximately 4,500 teachers in Denver, but only 3,200 who belong to the union. Only union members were allowed to vote. Of those 3,200, only 2,718 cast a ballot. Of those votes, only 59 percent endorsed the plan. So, about 1,600 of Denver's 4.500 teachers thought highly enough of the idea to vote for it. The rest didn't, or didn't get the chance to say.

In addition, current teachers will have until the 2012-13 school year to switch from the current system to the new one. New hires will be automatically placed on the performance pay schedule. So, some of those "yes" votes were made by teachers who will retire—or move, or switch careers—without having to work under the new schedule.

That changes the whole dynamic. By having teachers in 2004 vote on a plan that will not apply to everyone until 2012, the Denver performance pay plan is now an experiment in recruitment and retention. What kinds of teachers will now apply for jobs in Denver? Which teachers will remain in the district and which will transfer to a district with a traditional salary schedule? Which teachers in other districts will want to transfer in?

Should the voters approve funding for the plan, many will be watching and analyzing student achievement in Denver for years to come. But equally interesting will be the effect of an available performance pay school district on the teacher labor market and, by extension, the effect on DCTA membership. Since Denver teachers are not compelled to join the union, will teachers drawn to performance pay be more union-friendly, or less? The ripple effects will be worth watching.

Mike Antonucci is director of the Education Intelligence Agency, which conducts public education research, analysis, and investigations. He also publishes a weekly Communiqué on teacher union activities. His email address is **EducationIntel@aol.com**. The weekly *Communiqué* is available online at **http://www.eiaonline.com**.

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Other Teacher Union News

Michigan Education Association Lawsuit Dismissed

On March 18, the Michigan Court of Appeals dismissed a Michigan Education Association (MEA) lawsuit against the Mackinac Center for Public Policy. The MEA complaint arose from a Mackinac fundraising letter that quoted MEA President Lu Battaglieri as saying in 2001, referring to Mackinac, "... quite frankly, I admire what they've done over the last couple of years ..."

Battaglieri did not dispute the accuracy of the quote, but claimed Mackinac had "misappropriated" his name for commercial purposes. The court concluded Mackinac's letter "falls squarely within the protection of the First Amendment for discourse on matters of public interest."

NEA Acknowledges Labor Department Probe ...

Not only are the National Education Association (NEA) and California Teachers Association (CTA) undergoing IRS audits, but NEA is also under investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor. On March 4, the Associated Press received public confirmation from NEA that the Labor Department is investigating whether the union had reported all its expenditures on its annual form LM-2.

"The general statement was, it's a review of the report and they wanted to see backup material," said NEA General Counsel Bob Chanin. "It was anything but focused. We'll keep giving them data and they'll keep asking questions."

The probe seems to have been prompted by a complaint filed by the Landmark Legal Foundation in 2002.

... and Forms a New Political Group

Faced with IRS and Department of Labor investigations concerning its political activities and reporting, the NEA has created a new advocacy organization that will be able to use both dues money and state PAC money to advance the union's goals.

Called "America Learns," the new group is a "social welfare organization," as defined by section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. The American Civil Liberties Union and National Rifle Association are examples of 501(c)(4) organizations. Such groups are allowed to lobby, provided doing so isn't their primary activity. They may not participate directly or indirectly in political campaigns.

The new organization's primary focus will be on "spreading the word about the misguided so-called NCLB law, and how to fix it." Any doubt that the organization will be controlled by NEA was erased by the identity of its key personnel:

- Anne Davis, president of the Illinois Education Association, will chair the board.
- The remaining two board members are Robert Bonazzi, executive director of the New Jersey Education Association, and Maurice Joseph, NEA's deputy general counsel.
- The executive director is John Hein, most recently the associate executive director of government relations for the California Teachers Association.

NEA is asking its state affiliates to contribute a minimum of $1 per member to America Learns, which can come from the union's general fund, PAC fund, or outside donations—though these are not tax deductible.

Most Philadelphia Teachers Can't Pass Content Tests

In March, more than half of Philadelphia's middle school teachers failed their content exams for certification as "highly qualified" teachers. Nearly two of every three teachers who took the math exam failed it, though one teacher who achieved a perfect score said the test "mostly included seventh- and eighth-grade math and touched on high school math."

"Content sometimes is really overrated," said Philadelphia middle school teacher Nick Perry, commenting on the news to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. "A teacher is like an artist, a coach. He has to be able to inspire children."

— *M.A.*

INTERNET INFO

The seven-page ruling of the Michigan Court of Appeals in the Battaglieri case is available for downloading from the Appeals Court Web site as a Zip file dated March 19, 2004: **http://courtofappeals.mijud.net/resources/asp/zipfiles.asp**

Landmark Legal Foundation's 2002 complaint regarding NEA's alleged failure to properly report its spending on political activities, is available online at **http://www.landmarklegal.org/complaints.cfm?webpage_id=503**.

NEA's most recent LM-2 reports may be accessed through the Department of Labor's disclosure Web site at **http://union-reports.dol.gov**.

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An Oasis in Satan's Backyard

by M. Royce Van Tassell

When Tim McNeill held a neighborhood meeting in Milwaukee's Metcalf Park to discuss his proposed Hope Christian School, one parent warned him against it.

"This is Satan's backyard," she said. "You don't want to do that here."

True to his upper Midwest Lutheran roots, that parent's despair only steeled McNeill's resolve.

In 1999, enrollment in Wisconsin's Lutheran schools was dwindling. Although some schools continued to thrive, enrollment had become tougher and tougher to maintain in Milwaukee's newly competitive private school market. The directors of the Lutheran schools, however, were convinced their system worked, and they wanted to make a statement.

After poring over Census tract data, they decided to open a new school in Metcalf Park, the roughest of Milwaukee's neighborhoods. The unemployment rate is 32 percent. Forty-two percent of adults 25 and older don't have a GED or a high school diploma, and 67 percent of the children live below the poverty line. Drugs, violence, and other crime are commonplace. Despite those demographics, McNeill was undaunted.

"We can do better than this. There are no excuses for children failing," he said. "You teach children by any means necessary."

After splitting his time in 2000 and 2001 between teaching at his old school and raising money for the new school, McNeill was determined to open Hope Christian in 2002. Several hurdles still loomed: He didn't have teachers, students, or a building. Most Metcalf Park buildings were built around the turn of the twentieth century; getting them up to code would cost thousands of dollars the Lutheran schools just didn't have.

In February 2002, they found a suitable building, but zoning ordinances prohibited them from opening a school in it. Over the next four months, McNeill negotiated with the realty company and the city, and on July 15 the city endorsed the deal with a change to the building's zoning. By leasing the building, Hope Christian would get a school, the realty company would have an occupant, and the city would continue receiving property taxes.

In May 2002—while negotiations with the city and the realty company continued—McNeill started recruiting students and teachers. He hoped to have 60 students in three classes: first grade, second grade, and a combined third/fourth grade. He walked the streets, going door to door, talking with families and distributing leaflets. When interested parents called, he personally visited them. Ironically, his biggest obstacle was being able to offer only grades one to four.

With all the drugs and crime in Metcalf Park, McNeill looked for several qualities in his teachers. They needed to be emotionally well centered, and they needed to be stable in their own lives. Complicating his teacher recruitment, he could offer starting salaries above the starting salaries in the Milwaukee public schools, but he couldn't keep pace with the district's raises. Nevertheless, he was able to hire three teachers and three teachers' aides. Two administrators rounded out the school's staff.

In August 2002, Hope Christian School opened its doors to 54 students—52 with vouchers and two former charter school students for free, because a state snafu made charter students ineligible for the voucher. This year three of the school's 126 students are in the same situation.

Without prompting from him, McNeill's teachers are at school by 6:45 a.m. and often stay until 5:00 p.m. On the weekends, they take their students to museums, the zoo, and other field trips. Those extra efforts illustrate McNeill's education philosophy: "If the kids fail, it's the teacher's fault."

When asked why he's put himself through this wringer, McNeill admits to moments of doubt. But he remembers times in his own life when someone was there to extend a helping hand.

"I get the feeling that the people in Metcalf Park don't want a handout, they just want a hand up," he says. "Someone needs to offer them opportunity and hope." And Tim McNeill is determined to do just that.

Royce Van Tassell is executive director of Education Excellence Utah. His email address is **royce@edexutah.org**.

DC Voucher Program Moving into High Gear

by George A. Clowes

Moving quickly so students can take advantage of the program in the school year starting this fall, the U.S. Department of Education and the Office of DC Mayor Anthony A. Williams in late March announced selection of the Washington Scholarship Fund (WSF) and Westat to administer and evaluate the first phase of the newly authorized DC Choice Incentive Program.

The program is the first federally funded program in the nation to provide "equal opportunity scholarships" to low-income students to attend parochial or private schools.

"I'm glad to see that this effort to expand school choice is moving ahead at full speed," said U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige.

Working as the lead organization in a partnership with other local nonprofit groups, WSF will begin an immediate campaign to make all eligible families in the District of Columbia aware of the voucher program. The effort will involve advertisements, mailings, door-to-door visits, and public meetings to provide information on eligibility, options, and application procedures. Local partner groups include Capital Partners for Education, DC Parents for School Choice, the Greater Washington Urban League, and the Parent Group.

"Our organization was founded just over a decade ago with the goal of expanding educational opportunities for District students. The new DC scholarship program perfectly aligns with our mission to enable families to have greater choice in where they send their children to elementary, middle, and high school," said Joseph E. Robert, Jr., chairman and CEO of J.E. Robert Companies and chairman of the WSF Board of Trustees.

WSF was chosen to operate the program through a competitive application process overseen by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement, in partnership with the office of Mayor Williams. Together with the nonprofit organization Fight For Children, Inc., the Mayor's office already had launched an advertising campaign and started making preparations with private schools to enroll scholarship recipients in the fall.

Paul Fetters

President George W. Bush, visiting Archbishop Carroll High School in Washington, DC on February 13, receives a Carroll letter jacket from Christina Beauzile, a senior at Carroll. Looking on is Patricia Weitzel-O'Neill, Ph.D., superintendent of Catholic schools for the Archdiocese of Washington.

Westat was awarded a 10-month contract by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to provide technical support to the program operator of the DC Choice Incentive Program. In collaboration with Georgetown University and Chesapeake Research Associates, Westat will assist WSF on the design and execution of the lottery that will be used to randomly assign scholarships to eligible student applicants.

A second contract will be awarded by the IES to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the program. IES expects to conduct the competition for the evaluation this spring and award the contract in June.

George A. Clowes is managing editor of School Reform News. *His email address is* **clowes@heartland.org**.

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The Friedman Report

The Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization established in 1996 by Milton and Rose Friedman. The origins of the foundation lie in the Friedmans' long-standing concern about the serious deficiencies in America's elementary and secondary public schools. The best way to improve the quality of education, they believe, is to enable all parents to have a truly free choice of the schools their children attend. The Friedman Foundation works to build upon this vision, clarify its meaning to the general public, and amplify the national call for true education reform through school choice. Contact us at **http://www.friedmanfoundation.org** for more information.

The Milton & Rose D. Friedman Foundation
One American Square #1760
Indianapolis, IN 46282

Step Up for Students

Rally participants speak with Representative Eleanor Sobel (D-Broward County) to try to persuade her to support Florida's Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program.

State Roundup

by Robert Fanger

ARIZONA

Tax Credits Benefit Public Schools, Too

Many Arizona public schools are experiencing a significant increase in donations for extracurricular activities as a result of the Arizona Scholarship Tax Credit. A provision of the 1997 law allows taxpayers to receive a tax credit for contributions they make to public schools as well as to charitable organizations that provide tuition scholarships to students attending private schools.

The program allows married couples filing jointly to receive a tax credit of up to $625 for donations to private school scholarship organizations. In addition, they can receive a credit of up to $250 for donations to public schools. For single filers, the credit limits are $500 and $200 respectively.

The donations can add up to significant sums of money. For example, *Education Week* reports the 27,000-student Chandler Unified district received $862,244 in 2003, up 22 percent from the previous year. The Deer Valley Unified system received $809,047 last year, up 15 percent from 2002.

Education Week
March 10, 2004

CALIFORNIA

13-year-old Boy Could Lay Groundwork for Vouchers

A mother who is paying $9,000 a year in tuition for her 13-year-old son to attend the University of California at Los Angeles is suing California for failing to provide him with a free education.

Levi Clancy began reading high school books at age 5, enrolled in the Santa Monica Community College at age 7, and began attending classes at UCLA in February. Clancy passed the California High School Proficiency exam when he was 9 but California law mandates he must attend school until age 16.

His mother, Leila Levi, a single parent, says she cannot afford the tuition at UCLA. Her lawsuit argues her son should be provided with a free college education since the state has a compulsory attendance law and the state constitution requires he be provided a free education.

"You can't send him back to public school, because they don't have the means to educate a kid this gifted," Leila Levi's attorney, Richard Ackerman, told *WorldNetDaily*. "The only way his intellectual needs can be met is if he goes to a high-level, four-year college."

California school districts receive a minimum of $7,200 per student from the state. Ackerman believes providing the family with a voucher would allow Clancy to continue attending the college classes.

WorldNetDaily.com
February 20, 2004

FLORIDA

School Choice Supporters Rally at State Capitol

Florida Governor Jeb Bush joined several thousand children, parents, and teachers who rallied at the state capitol in Tallahassee on March 9 to demonstrate their support for the state's voucher programs.

"As long as I'm governor, we will have school choice in this state," Bush told the rally, saying he was "very proud" that Florida has the largest school choice program in the country.

"To me it's as American as apple pie that parents be given a wide array of choices for their children," he continued. "More choices creates more opportunities. It makes all schools better."

While parents touted what the school choice programs had done for their children, most legislators glossed over proposals that are in the works to add more "accountability" through student testing and additional oversight of choice school finances.

Carmen Rivero, whose two sons use tax credit scholarships to attend Kissimmee's Heartland Christian Academy, said her fifth-grader Henry was bullied in his former public school and "invented being sick" to avoid going to school. Now, she told the *Tallahassee Democrat*, his grades have improved and he "loves to go to school."

A *Wall Street Journal* editorial noted that in the past five years, "Florida has delivered real school choice to more American school children than anywhere else in the country." The editors viewed the push to bring "accountability" to the state's voucher programs as "really aimed at regulating them to death."

While it was embarrassing to have a scholarship operator under criminal investigation for looting $268,000 from one of the state's school choice programs, "[I]t is small beer compared to the glaring scandal of a public school system in which more than half of the state's African-American and Latino teens will never see a high school diploma," the editors noted.

Tallahassee Democrat
March 10, 2004
Wall Street Journal
March 25, 2004

KANSAS

Voucher Bill Introduced in House

On February 23, House Bill 2906, "The Opportunity Scholarship Program for At-Risk Students," was introduced in the Kansas legislature, with hearings scheduled for March 16. The bill is patterned after the voucher bill approved last year in Colorado.

At the same time, the Flint Hills Center for Public Policy released a study by education analyst Dan Lips that outlines the reasons why Kansas should implement a voucher program. The study is titled "An Opportunity Scholarship Proposal for Kansas: Providing Families a Choice and Taxpayers a Break."

HB 2906 would create a voucher program for at-risk students in elementary and secondary public schools so they could attend participating nonpublic schools. Some 130,200 at-risk children would be eligible to participate in the program. Nonpublic schools participating in the program would need to meet the standards specified in the bill regarding nondiscrimination, and would be required to administer statewide assessments to the children in the program. The value of the scholarship would be half of the statewide average state aid per pupil for the preceding year.

"There's some things built in so that the public schools ... will not suffer from losing those monies and yet still allow the families to choose to move to someplace that might work better for their own child," said Cindy Duckett, director of Children First: CEO Kansas.

Kansas State Legislature
http://www.kslegislature.org
Flint Hills Center for Public Policy
http://www.flinthills.org

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LOUISIANA

Archdiocese Again Pushing for School Vouchers

In the upcoming legislative session, the Archdiocese of New Orleans will again work for passage of voucher programs designed to benefit children in failing public schools in New Orleans. Although Louisiana lawmakers defeated similar bills introduced last year by then-Governor Mike Foster, at least three voucher bills are expected to be introduced in the 2004 session.

The least controversial bill, Senate Bill 220, would simply bring the state's existing preschool voucher program under state law. The program, which pays for 1,500 four-year-olds to attend private preschool facilities, is supported with $8.5 million in this year's proposed budget and sponsored by Sen. Jay Dardenne (R-Baton Rouge).

The second bill, SB 50, sponsored by Sen. John Hainkel (R-New Orleans), would allow the preschoolers who receive vouchers under SB 220 to continue in the same school until third grade. Senate Education Committee member Paulette Irons (D-New Orleans) said she is considering supporting the proposal because she did not want to force the voucher students into low-performing public schools.

"I'm giving it serious consideration only because the school system is in such disarray," she told *The Times-Picayune*.

The third bill, House Bill 366, sponsored by Rep. Steve Scalise (R-Jefferson), would establish a four-year pilot program to allow students in the 14 failing public schools in Orleans Parish to use state funds to attend a private school.

The Times Picayune
March 19, 2004

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Despite One-Vote Loss, Voucher Advocates Press on

Although the New Hampshire House rejected a voucher bill in early January, the House Education Committee voted on January 15 to recommend a similar bill, House Bill 1353, to the state House when it met on February 5. When this bill missed passage by a single vote, 172-171, voucher advocates said they would continue educating the public on the benefits of school choice.

"Until New Hampshire makes positive steps towards a parental choice program we will be trapped in a funding mechanism doomed to be cost-prohibitive," Rep. Packy Campbell (R-Farmington) told *Foster's Sunday Citizen*. "Legislators didn't know enough about the program [in February]. This legislation is coming back."

The Josiah Bartlett Center for Public Policy, in partnership with the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation, released a study earlier this year showing a similar voucher program would save money for New Hampshire communities. The Bartlett Center plans to hold public forums on school vouchers this summer.

"Our education funding system at the state level is a mess but a voucher bill could target assistance," Bartlett Center President Charlie Arlinghaus told *Foster's*.

Foster's Sunday Citizen
February 22, 2004

PENNSYLVANIA

Lawmakers Consider Special-Ed Vouchers

Legislation to implement a voucher program for special-needs and gifted students was introduced in the Pennsylvania House on March 16.

Sponsored by Rep. Daryl Metcalfe (R-Butler), the bill would create a voucher whose value would be equal to the school district's cost to send a special-education student to a charter school. In explaining his proposal at a news conference, Metcalfe noted the success of a similar program in Florida.

"This is a new movement ... targeting a certain population of students who really need to have this help," said Metcalfe.

Dennis Giorno, executive director of the REACH Alliance, hailed the bill, telling *The Patriot News*, "This bill goes a long way to putting parents back in charge of their child's education."

Commonwealth Foundation President and CEO Matt Brouillette said the proposed bill would not require private schools to meet the same accountability provisions for special education students outlined in the No Child Left Behind Act.

"Parent choice is a much, much higher level of accountability than No Child Left Behind will ever be or ever hope to be," Brouillette told *The Patriot News*.

The Patriot News (Harrisburg)
March 17, 2004

SOUTH CAROLINA

Governor's Tax Credit Plan Involves Income and Property Taxes

On February 26, South Carolina Governor Mark Sanford announced details of his "Put Parents in Charge Act," an education plan that would provide tax credits of up to $4,600 to offset private school tuition for families making less than $75,000 a year. The status quo is not working, he said.

"This bill creates a marketplace influence within education that will then produce the kind of innovation that is so vital to the success of South Carolina in the twenty-first century," said Sanford, noting his proposal would save the state money because the cost of the credits would be less than the cost of educating a student in the public schools.

The maximum $4,600 tax credit would be available for high school students, with a reduced maximum credit of $4,000 for students in grades 1-8, and a maximum credit of $3,200 for kindergartners. Homeschoolers could claim the credit, too. The bill also provides dollar-for-dollar tax credits for residents and businesses who donate to scholarship organizations. If the parents' income is greater than $75,000, another direct relative, such as a grandparent, could claim the credit.

The bill will be introduced by House Speaker Pro Tem Doug Smith (R-Spartanburg), who told *The Charleston Post and Courier* it would help families earning low and moderate incomes. That was immediately disputed by critics, who said the average income tax bill in South Carolina was just $1,667.

However, Smith pointed out the credit could be applied to a family's property tax liability as well as its income tax liability.

The Post and Courier (Charleston)
February 27, 2004

UTAH

Governor Vetoes Scholarships for Disabled Children

On March 23, Utah Governor Olene Walker vetoed a measure that would have allowed 56,000 disabled children to receive a scholarship to cover tuition at any Utah private school of their choice. In response to the veto, seven of Walker's primary opponents held a press conference to call on legislators to override her decision.

The "Carson Smith Special Needs Scholarships" program, embodied in HB 115, would have provided parents with a voucher worth up to $5,400 to use for tuition at a private school. To qualify, disabled children would have to be enrolled in a Utah public school in the prior year and have an Individual Education Plan.

A week after the veto, parents of children with autism and several of Walker's primary opponents—including Sen. Parley Hellewell and Fred Lampropulos—participated in a press conference at the Matheson Courthouse. There they voiced support for parents being given the choice to make the education decisions for their child.

"Financially, it would really help a lot of families and mine included," Brenda Hanchett-Roach, a parent of an autistic child, told KSL-TV. "My husband works two jobs and we just have done a lot of things, have made some sacrifices."

In a statement read at the news conference, primary candidate Jon Huntsman, Jr. said Walker was wrong to veto the bill and urged the Utah legislature to overturn the veto. A veto override would require a positive vote from two-thirds of the entire state legislature.

"We should be providing relief for those with the greatest of needs," said Huntsman.

Deseret Morning News
March 24, 2004
Salt Lake City KSL-TV
March 30, 2004

WISCONSIN

Increased Oversight of Voucher Schools

On March 16, Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle signed legislation that gives state education officials greater oversight authority for voucher school finances.

The bill requires voucher schools annually to provide evidence they are exercising sound fiscal policies, while also requiring schools that want to join the program to first prove they are financially viable. Schools that fail to meet the new standards can be kicked out of the program or have voucher payments to them withheld by the Department of Public Instruction.

"It comes none too soon as news reports on voucher schools ... tell of overdue rent, unpaid teachers, idle students, and possible criminal activity," Doyle said at the bill-signing ceremony in Milwaukee.

Some questioned the state's apparent double standard with regard to its response to wrongdoing at public versus private schools.

"When things happen with us [voucher schools], the whole program is thrown into question," school choice advocate Howard Fuller told CBS 5 News. "When there's a problem in a public school that doesn't happen."

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
March 17, 2004
Green Bay CBS 5 News
March 23, 2004

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The Scientific Basis of Teaching Reading

by Herbert J. Walberg

Because learning in most subjects depends on reading skills, reading proficiency can be considered the most important goal in the early grades. Yet, the National Assessment of Educational Progress survey shows only 29 percent of fourth-graders are proficient in reading. Children who fall substantially behind in reading in the early grades are unlikely to catch up—meaning the process of dropping out of high school often starts in the early years.

The problem is more acute for children who live in poverty. By age four, poor children are exposed to about thirteen million words used by their parents, mostly in simple sentences. The affluent child, by contrast, is exposed to about forty-five million words, often in more complex sentences.

Researchers have synthesized a great number of control-group studies that reveal scientific principles for effectively encouraging and teaching reading. Preschoolers, for example, benefit greatly from talking with and receiving coaching from their parents, from whom they learn vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and a general knowledge of the world. Their parents and teachers can also foster sound and letter recognition, knowledge of how letters combine to form sounds, and "decoding," or sounding out words.

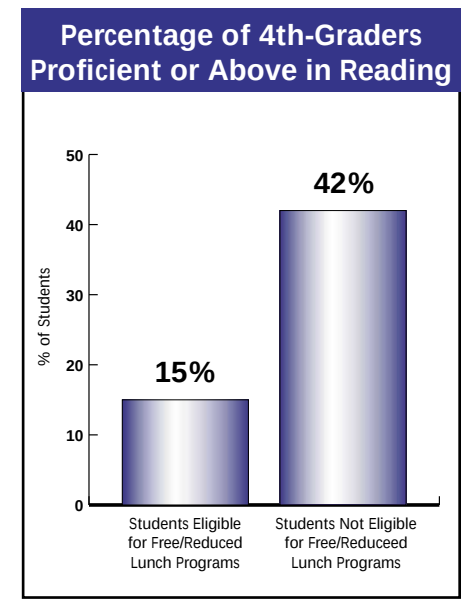
After mastering these elements, students need sufficient practice to gain fluency and meaningful oral reading. If fourth-graders are still struggling with sounding out words, if they need a tongue between their teeth to remember the sound blend of "th," they are unlikely to enjoy reading and academically thrive. The more students read out loud and to themselves, the more they build their fluency as well as their vocabulary and the knowledge to understand new texts.

As readers progress, they learn "comprehension strategy"—the identification of questions or purposes—to guide their reading and measure their progress. They need explicit instruction in how to skim material for a quick overview or to find a given fact or idea, but they also need to learn to read a poem or scientific passage reflectively, intensively, and perhaps repeatedly until they have a deep and thorough understanding. Skilled readers have learned to adapt such methods to their purposes and to look for milestones of their progress.

Wise teachers know the inefficiency of teaching students things they already know and things they are not yet able to learn. Parents, teachers, and students themselves can make reading time more efficient by choosing material that is sufficiently but not overly challenging. Moreover, choosing material that is inherently interesting for particular students may enhance motivation.

Finally, students need to know how they are progressing. Conversations with teachers, parents, librarians, and others, classroom discussions and quizzes, and formal examinations can provide useful information about students' mastery of texts and the strengths and weaknesses of their specific reading skills.

Each of these principles has an excellent record of fostering skilled, masterful reading. If all children were afforded their benefits, perhaps nine in 10 rather than three in 10 would be proficient readers by fourth grade, and we could expect their success to show in later grades and in high school completion rates.



Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress, Reading, 2003.

Herbert J. Walberg is a distinguished visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution; a member of Hoover's Koret Task Force on K-12 Education; and University Scholar and research professor emeritus of education and psychology at the University of Illinois at Chicago. *This material was first published as a Hoover Institute Weekly Essay on January 26, 2004*
http://www-hoover.stanford.edu/pubaffairs/we/2004/walberg01.html
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Teaching Teachers To Teach Reading

by George A. Clowes

"When I was a teacher, I knew I was not as prepared as I should have been to teach certain subjects. Take reading, for example. Even with a degree in education and practice as a student teacher, I didn't know how to teach a child to read. ... I realized that some of my students were having trouble learning—not because of a problem on their part, but because I needed to know more about the concepts."

Laura Bush, March 2002
Remarks to the House Education and Workforce Committee

When schools of education fail to keep abreast of scientific research on the teaching of reading, their graduates become new elementary school teachers who find themselves in situations similar to the one described by the First Lady: producing children who are having trouble learning because of the instructional methods their teachers are using.

How can teachers learn the most effective methods for teaching children to read? Scholastic Corporation provides one readily accessible solution.

Last fall, Scholastic added individual teacher enrollment to its online professional development program for improving reading instruction, Scholastic Red®. The program remains available for district purchase for groups of teachers within schools, but this extension provides individual teachers with access to the program's leading reading researchers, interactive training, and resources for implementing reading strategies in the classroom. Scholastic Red® is currently in use in urban districts such as Atlanta, Georgia; Clark County in Las Vegas, Nevada; and El Paso, Texas.

"New federal standards requiring schools and teachers to show growth in academic achievement and adequate yearly progress for each student have increased the need for every teacher to know how to help their students master key reading skills," said John Lent, vice president of Scholastic Education.

Scholastic Red® provides teachers with self-paced instruction and training resources available 24/7. The professional development program provides resources and techniques for teaching the five key components of early reading identified in the No Child Left Behind Act:

- phonemic awareness
- phonics
- fluency
- vocabulary, and
- comprehension.

Among the resources Scholastic Red® offers individual teachers are:

■ interactive simulations and video modeling of research-based practices and lessons by master teachers in real classrooms.

■ opportunities to practice new strategies in a safe, virtual environment, and collaboration and feedback within a supportive community of online learners.

■ online support of teachers through online mentors who answer questions, help teachers implement new strategies, and lend guidance.

■ ideas and activities for working with special education and ESL students.

Scholastic Red®'s faculty and national advisors include leading reading specialists Louisa Cook Moats, former director of the National Institutes of Child Health and Human Development Early Intervention Project; and Phyllis Hunter, national reading consultant.

Scholastic Corporation is the world's largest publisher and distributor of a wide range of educational materials for use in school and at home, including children's books, magazines, technology-based products, teacher materials, television programming, videos, and toys. The company distributes its products and services through schools, school organizations, retail stores, libraries, television networks, and the Internet.

George A. Clowes is managing editor of School Reform News. *His email address is* **clowes@heartland.org**.

INTERNET INFO

Additional information on Scholastic Red® is available online at **http://www.scholasticred.com**.

Information on other Scholastic reading programs, such as the Fluency Formula program to increase reader comprehension, is available at **http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/product_info**.

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Brown Decision Got the Law Right, But Not the Facts

by Lee H. Walker

This month marks the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The decision gets its name from a black family in Topeka, Kansas, who thought their young daughter Linda should be able to attend a public school closer to their home. Although her application was denied because the school was for whites only, the Supreme Court subsequently ruled public education must be made available to all children on equal terms.

The *Brown* decision was a pivotal moment in American history, for Southern blacks in particular. After ending slavery and seeing the collapse of Reconstruction, the United States was now taking its first step toward dismantling legalized segregation in its public education system. Up to this point, the Southern states had sponsored a two-tiered public school system, one for blacks and one for whites. That two-tier system was ruled unconstitutional in a unanimous decision by the 1954 *Brown* court.

I was in the ninth grade on May 17, 1954, when the ruling was issued. I remember it well. After growing up in the segregated society of Troy and Montgomery, Alabama, with separate "white" and "colored" water fountains in all the downtown stores, I paid attention when the news on the radio reported the Court's decision.

"How different would the last half-century have been if the *Brown* decision had been focused less on the segregation of blacks and whites and more on blacks achieving a quality education? Or less on sociology and more on fact?"

"We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place," the Court declared. "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

The *Brown* case was the major topic of discussion for the remaining 17 days of school that year. As students, we thought we would at last get the chance to compete head-to-head with white students, with all students reading from the same books. Until then, we had only one chance a year to read from the same book as whites: When our high school marching band paraded through town. There is only one way to play John Philip Sousa.

The black teachers were concerned about losing their jobs. They knew white parents would not allow them to teach their children. In fact, many did lose their jobs.

Court Missed the Inequality

In *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Court overturned the precedent of the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, where the court had ruled that states requiring separate but equal accommodations for blacks and whites did not violate the equal protection guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

In formulating their decision, the 1954 Supreme Court justices saw conditions in public schools for blacks and whites as essentially equal but separate. They reported as fact that "the Negro and white schools involved have been equalized, or are being equalized, with respect to buildings, curricula, qualifications and salaries of teachers, and other 'tangible' factors."

In reality, the facts were different. The reality of life in the South was not "equal but separate" between the two races, but always *unequal* and separate. For example, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige recently referred to the stark inequalities he experienced growing up in Monticello, Mississippi.

"They had a gym. We played on dirt courts," he told *U.S. News and World Report*. "They had new textbooks. Our textbooks had the covers torn off."

Despite the reality, the Court declared educational facilities for blacks and whites were equal. The problem, the justices concluded, was not unequal public school facilities but public school segregation, which produced "a sense of inferiority" among black children and deprived them of "equal educational opportunities." Legally sanctioned segregation, they stated, "has a tendency to [retard] the educational and mental development of Negro children and to deprive them of some of the benefits they would receive in a racial[ly] integrated school system."

On May 31, 1955, the High Court revisited *Brown* to consider remedies, including whether "Negro children should forthwith be admitted to schools of their choice." The Court ruled schools must be desegregated "with all deliberate speed." That phrase allowed my home state of Alabama to avoid implementing *Brown* until 1963. In fact, "deliberate speed" ended up being virtually no speed at all, as the Court itself admitted when it began to fashion a more forceful remedy in the 1960s.

Gap Remains

Entering the twenty-first century and looking back on the past 50 years of *Brown*, it is clear there still is segregation, but for different reasons than in 1954. More important, there is a persistently wide gap in educational achievement between black and white children. For example, ongoing national tests show the average 17-year-old black student has about the same reading skills as the average 13-year-old white student.

Much of the gap may be attributed to low expectations for black students, but many districts are beginning to set higher standards. New York City, for example, recently established that all students would have to pass tests of basic skills in reading and math before being allowed to move up to the next grade. That's a tough-love approach—and it may be difficult to enforce over the long term. The Chicago Public School system, for example, recently backed off its tough promotion standards for third, sixth, and eighth grades.

Today, as in 1954, education is the most important function of state and local governments. It is the number one civil rights issue among younger blacks, who are fighting with older black leaders about educational choice as a viable strategy for addressing the problem of persistently failing public schools. Low-income parents in particular need better choices.

How different would the last half-century have been if the *Brown* decision had been focused less on the segregation of blacks and whites and more on blacks achieving a quality education? Or less on sociology and more on fact? What is undeniable is that, 50 years after *Brown*, black students still need to achieve much more.

Lee H. Walker is president of The New Coalition for Economic and Social Change, which works to develop and promote a conservative multicultural perspective on economic and social policies. His email address is **lwalker@newcoalition.org**.

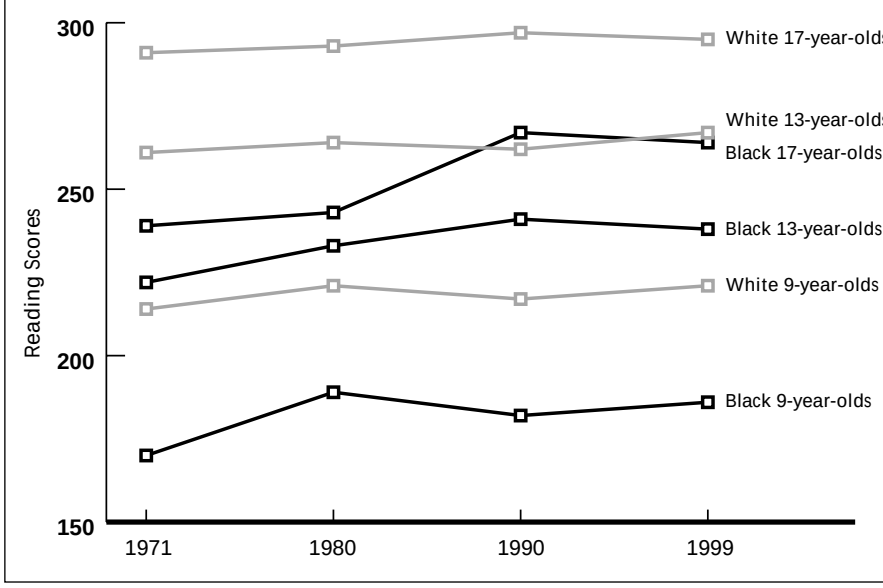
"The Most Important Function of State and Local Governments"

"Today, education is perhaps the most important function of state and local governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our democratic society. It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms."

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

Learning Gap In Reading

National Assessment of Educational Progress



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A School Reformer's Journey:

FROM PARENT TO JOURNALIST TO POLICY ANALYST

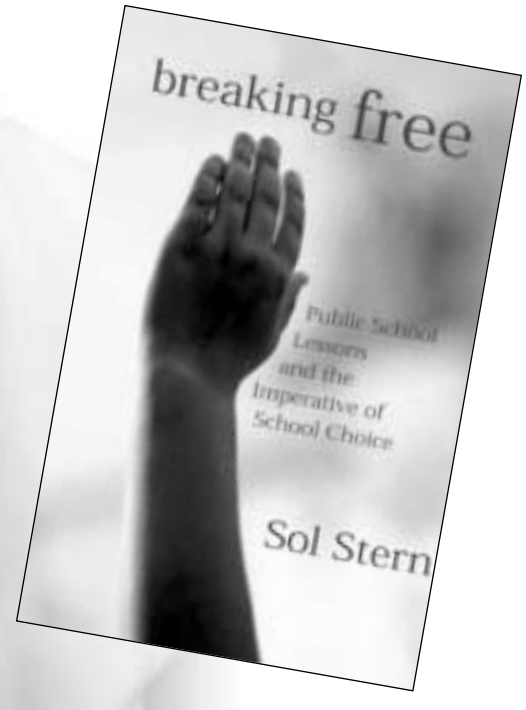
City Journal senior editor Sol Stern just wants New York City's public school system to provide today's children with the same solid foundation of knowledge and skills it gave to him during the 1940s as a non-English-speaking child from Israel.

With that foundation, Stern graduated from one of the city's selective-enrollment high schools and from the City College of New York, continuing with an M.A. in political science from the State University of Iowa and further graduate work at the University of California at Berkeley.

But most children who attend public schools in New York City today aren't being prepared even for high school, let alone college or the job market. In March this year, 306,087 of the city's 1 million public school students—30 percent—were warned they were in danger of being held back because they could not meet the academic requirements for promotion to the next grade. Last December, results from the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed only 21 percent of the city's fourth-graders were proficient or above in reading. A full third (33 percent) were classed as "Below Basic"—they could not demonstrate even partial mastery of the knowledge and skills required for fourth-grade work. By eighth grade, the percentage of students reading "Below Basic" balloons to 46 percent.

Stern discovered how much New York City's public schools had changed when his own two children began their education in them in the early 1990s. What he experienced as a parent, what he found as an investigative journalist, and what he concluded as a policy analyst are detailed in his latest book, *Breaking Free: Public School Lessons and the Imperative of School Choice* (Encounter Books, 2003). Stern's views on education reform appear regularly in *City Journal* and also in a range of other publications, including the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *New York Daily News*, *New York Sun*, and *Newsday*.

After graduating from college, Stern was an editor and staff writer for *Ramparts* magazine from 1966-72 and a freelance writer until 1984. From 1985-94, he served as press secretary and senior policy advisor in the Office of the City Council President of New York. He subsequently served for a year as executive director of a New York State Commission on Juvenile Justice Reform before returning to journalism and a position as senior fellow with the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. Stern recently spoke with *School Reform News* Managing Editor George Clowes.



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AN INTERVIEW WITH

Sol Stern

by George A. Clowes

Clowes: *How did you come to be involved in school reform?*

Stern: I was sort of a late bloomer. I began as a public education consumer. I had my children in the public schools in New York City about 15 years ago. I was a parent concerned about his children's education. Then, as I began to observe some of the strange things that were going on in their schools, my reporter's instincts took over and I started investigating further.

I started writing about what I saw, generalizing and drawing conclusions from my own children's schools, and taking a look at the system as a whole to try to understand why it doesn't work very well. I also began to look at other school systems, including the parochial school system, to see what we could learn from them. I found myself in a new career: Examining and debunking, and trying to work from my own experience to reach conclusions about how to improve education in general for all children.

I was a product of the New York City public schools. My entire experience was with public schools, and I considered myself a very strong supporter of the role of public schooling in our democracy. I cared very deeply about how the public schools inculcated the civic ethic and an understanding of the democratic system, and in moving new generations of immigrants and the poor up through the economic system by giving them an opportunity for advancement.

That was what the public schools did for me. Part of my reaction to what was going on in my children's schools was a disappointment that the schools were no longer doing that very well.

Clowes: *During the past year, your focus has been on progressive education and pedagogy. Were those concerns initially?*

Stern: In the elementary school that both of my children attended, I was struck by the change in pedagogy and found myself becoming a critic of progressive education.

At first, I didn't take it very seriously. But then I came to realize that progressive education is very damaging for disadvantaged children who come from homes without a lot of books and conversation. These children, more than anyone else, needed to start with the basic skills in language and numeracy.

Until the past year, I hadn't actually written that much about pedagogy. I've done a lot on vouchers, on charter schools, and the polit-

ical role of the teachers' union. I've focused on the structural issues, like the teachers' union contract, and the work rules that I felt were an obstacle to academic improvement and reform.

But I began to look at progressive education again because of the strange story of what happened in New York during the past two years. Voucher supporters and school reformers generally had come to the conclusion that there was only one last hope for really reforming the city's schools, and that was to give total control of the schools to the mayor: Let the mayor be accountable. In the old system, we didn't know who to hold accountable, because it was so entangled.

Although some of us would have preferred vouchers as a solution—that is, accountability through competition and by allowing the consumers of education to take their business elsewhere—we realized that New York would be the last place in the country to approve vouchers because of the enormous power of the unions here, and because of the broken political system that's responsive to interest groups rather than civic needs.

"If you have a school that is horrendous, that is destroying children, then it's morally incumbent on us as a society to provide an opportunity for those children to get out and find a school that works for them, even with taxpayer money."

I was initially a very strong supporter of what Mayor Bloomberg was doing. He brought in as his new chancellor Joel Klein, who was head of the Justice Department's Anti-Trust Division. The mayor said all the right things in a speech on Martin Luther King Day in 2003, when he spoke about all the reforms that he was going to unveil. He said students would be doing phonics. It really seemed that we were going to go back to the basics in terms of classroom instruction, pedagogy, and curriculum.

I praised that speech in an article in *City Journal,* but within a few months, I felt that I had been had. Chancellor Klein brought in Diana Lam as his chief instructional supervisor and basically turned over all the instruction issues to her. She is a progressive education ideologue, and she came into town with her guns blazing. She got rid of anyone with a more traditional bent and installed the most ideological of the progressives in all the key regions of power.

She then picked reading and math programs that were the essence of the whole progressive approach: Teachers should not be figures of authority and children should learn by "constructing" their own knowledge. Since we had given the mayor such total control—with the power to impose this approach top-down on every single school—what we got was the most thorough-going progressive education revolution in the country.

Clowes: *Yet the reforms sounded as if they had the right components in them*—Month-by-Month Phonics*, for example.*
Stern: There isn't much phonics in *Month-by-Month Phonics*, the program Diana Lam picked for New York City. It's a "balanced literacy program," which is the term used by progressives so as not to fly directly in the face of parents and elected officials, who have come to understand that the best way to teach reading is through explicit phonics. With "balanced literacy," students get a lot of Whole Language and a little bit of phonics.

The authors of the *Month-by-Month Phonics Handbook* actually de-emphasize phonics. For example, they write, "Teaching all children to read is essential and can be done, but it will never happen with a just-teaching-phonics curriculum." Every once in a while they have a little extra drill in some phonemic awareness, but it's very inadequate. In fact, it was deemed inadequate by the best reading experts in the country—the people who were involved in the National Reading Panel.

These same reading experts are consultants for the U.S. Department of Education in administering the Reading First program as part of the No Child Left Behind Act. It's one of the best parts of No Child Left Behind—the idea that the federal government is going to hand out money only on the basis of the recipient school districts using it for programs that are proven to work based on scientific research. What an innovation!

The *Month-by-Month Phonics* program did not qualify for Reading First funds because it did not involve systematic and explicit phonics. So what the district did was to ask for $40 million for another program—Harcourt, an explicit phonics-based program—to install in just 50 of the city's 1,200 schools. They got the money, but after some embarrassment.

The tragedy is that, after all of this, there's an anti-academic bias in most of the schools. Although Diana Lam is now gone—she got herself enmeshed in a nepotism scandal and was asked to resign—Klein has become a progressive education true believer, and Lam's temporary replacement is even more of an ideologue than she was. She's rooted firmly in the constructivist "fuzzy math" approach where children don't have to learn operations, multiplication tables, or algorithms. The current approach is that children learn best when they learn by themselves.

Clowes: *What's your view on the mayor's recent ending of social promotion?*
Stern: As an education reformer, and as a traditionalist, normally I would be completely on the mayor's side on this. A system that pushes students up through the grades regardless of whether they have mastered even the most minimal reading and math skills doesn't expect very much from kids or from their teachers and principals. But there's a corollary to that: If you're trying to re-institute accountability and high expectations, and you're going to get rid of this evil of social promotion, then the system's leadership has a moral obligation to make sure that the children are being educated with the best available approaches and programs, those that have been shown to work.

Accountability begins with adults before the children. By refusing to look at the scientific evidence and teaching children how to read with reading programs that don't work, New York City's current leadership is engaging in what Reid Lyon, the President's reading advisor, calls "educational malpractice." With these ineffective teaching methods, I don't think that the mayor's program of ending social promotion is going to work very well.

Clowes: *In your book,* Breaking Free*, you call school choice an imperative. Is that because it allows parents to choose teaching practices that do work?*
Stern: Yes, absolutely. Coming to school choice as a public school parent, as a disappointed supporter of the public schools, I saw it on two or three levels.

First of all, there is the moral imperative: If you have a school that is horrendous, that is destroying children, then it's morally incumbent on us as a society to provide an opportunity for those children to get out and find a school that works for them, even with taxpayer money. It's not a question of protecting the public school system, it's protecting the children and protecting their right to an equal education.

At the same time, I came to the conclusion that one of the things that make public schools so ineffective and so dysfunctional is that they are part of a monopoly system that never has to worry about competition or losing its customers. By preventing taxpayer money from going into parochial schools, we created a kind of Berlin Wall around the public school system. This wall not only prevented children from leaving—because they couldn't take any taxpayer money with them—it also prevented new ideas and new talent from coming into the system. There was no pressure to bring them in.

One of the things that I discovered in visiting Milwaukee was the wonderful voucher schools that have been created there, like Mesmer Academy, and its great principal Brother Bob, and the Bruce Guadalupe School founded by Walter Sava. What I saw were educators who had devoted their lives to children, educators whose services we would not have had if it weren't for vouchers. One of the advantages to a system with choice is that it breaks down the walls between the two systems and makes us realize there are different approaches that could be tried.

I saw that in Milwaukee. The voucher schools and the public schools began to cooperate and learn from each other. Public schools were forced by the competition to adopt some of the voucher schools' approaches. Once vouchers had broken through the wall, there were more exchanges between parents in the public schools and parents in the parochial schools.

Clowes: *What will it take to break through that wall in New York City?*
Stern: That's a tough question. At the moment, I'm pretty pessimistic. Spending in New York City is up to around $12,000 per pupil. It's one of the highest spending levels in the country, and we're not getting very much for it.

The debate, unfortunately, is dominated by the interest groups and the politicians who have convinced the public that the answer is more money and more resources. It's not the money, it's the way we do things. It's the rules and the regulations we impose upon the public school system. It's the lack of competition.

"One of the advantages to a system with choice is that it breaks down the walls between the two systems [public schools and private] and makes us realize there are different approaches that could be tried."

We could accomplish far more in our schools if we just applied some common sense and allowed public schools to run by some of the same principles that just about every other enterprise in the country runs by: Support for excellence, competition, getting rid of slackers, and empowering and encouraging people who work hard. These seem like very simple things, but they are the keys to getting our schools to work.

Still, there are hopeful signs. We are getting a voucher program in the nation's capital, and I hope that some New York City and New York State politicians take a look at that program. If the President of the United States is willing to expend some of his political capital to do the right thing and give children in Washington a chance to get out of their terrible schools, it can be done here, too. It's not going to destroy the Republic.

The first lesson of education in American should be: "Do no harm." There's no way a voucher program could do harm. On the other hand, the programs we are using now are doing harm.

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Thumbnail Sketch of Texas Education

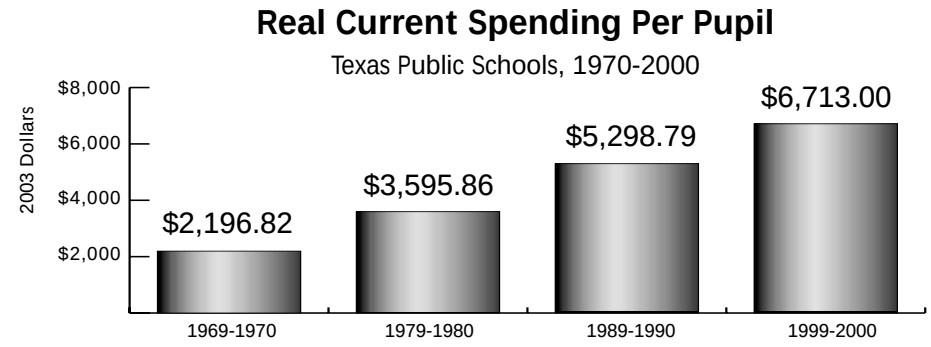
Texas spends more than $30 billion a year in taxpayer funds on education; half of that amount is raised locally. Average per-pupil spending in 2002-03 was just more than $8,000, with the lowest-spending district at $4,358 per student and the highest at $72,000 per student. A little over half of the funding, on average, is used on instruction. The student-teacher ratio is 12.5 to one.

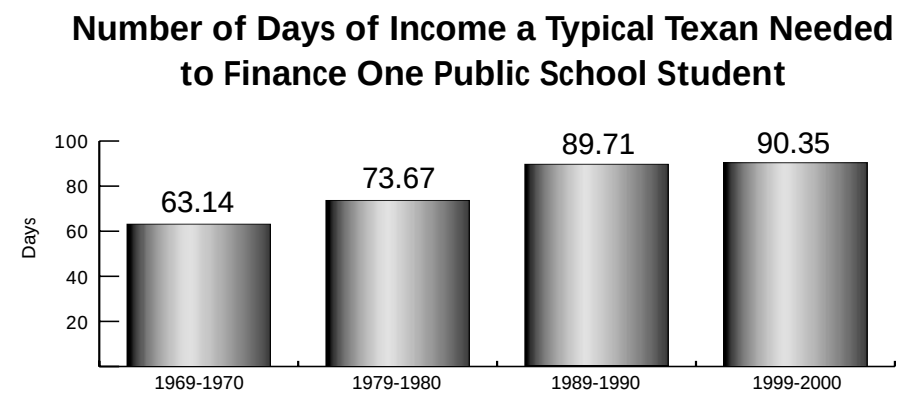
The state categorizes more than half of its students as economically disadvantaged. The average school district is approximately 4,000 students, but given the wide variability of district sizes the median district size is 907 students.

The average district had 68 percent of its students in grades 3-11 pass all Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills tests in the 2002-2003 school year. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, Texas students score slightly above the national average. The state has a slightly higher than average dropout rate.

Measured in 2003 dollars, real current spending per pupil more than tripled over the past 30 years, from $2,197 in 1969-70 to $6,713 in 1999-2000. The rise in spending per pupil far outpaced the growth of income per person in the state. The number of days of income it takes a typical Texan to pay for one student's public education each year jumped almost 50 percent, from 63 days in 1969-70 to 90 days in 1999-2000.

— K.K.





Texas

Continued from page 1

District, for example, had 93 percent of its students pass all Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests with a $4,358 per-pupil expenditure, compared to state averages of 68 percent and more than $8,000. More than half of the district's students are categorized as economically disadvantaged, and more than a quarter are Limited English Proficient, making the district's success all the more remarkable.

Instead of asking, "How can we funnel more resources toward students who do not learn much at present?" Vedder and Hall suggest the right question to ask is: "How can we get poor learners to perform better academically?"

"The current tax system is sufficiently flexible and provides adequate revenue growth for public schools. Education spending and education productivity are the real problems that challenge Texas."

RICHARD VEDDER AND JOSHUA HALL

Using multiple regression analysis, the authors found:

- Out-of-school factors have the strongest influence on student achievement. Higher adult education correlates with higher student achievement, and higher poverty rates correlate with lower achievement.
- The in-school factor that relates most strongly to achievement is student attendance. Higher attendance correlates with higher achievement.
- Expenditures have a weak relationship to achievement; however, districts that derive a greater share of their expenditures from local property taxes have higher achievement.
- While teacher experience has a slightly positive correlation with achievement, teacher salaries are not related to student achievement. Higher rates of teacher turnover are related to lower achievement.
- Larger student-teacher ratios correlate with higher achievement.

Given these findings and those of other research, the authors make the following policy recommendations:

- Fund students directly, rather than schools and school districts.
- Allow districts to derive more of their funding from local revenues.
- Create incentives for greater school-level efficiency, rather than increasing expenditures or funding. Avoid top-down mandates.
- Pay teachers according to merit, based on student achievement.
- Strengthen accountability systems, rewarding good performance and punishing poor performance.
- Introduce competition and parental choice.

In their analysis of various tax increase proposals, the authors assert the adverse impact of those proposals—lower economic growth, personal income, job creation, and employment—would outweigh any benefit achieved by increased education funding. Of the tax plans, a sales tax would have the least pernicious effect on the economy and individual economic well being.

If lawmakers decide they must increase taxes, the authors recommend expanding the sales tax base and reducing the sales tax rate. They caution against replacing local tax dollars with state tax dollars because that would weaken the link between taxpayers and their local schools.

The authors propose an innovative way to preserve local control while giving parents greater freedom to choose the best education for their children. Under the plan, local property taxes would provide students with a free "core" of instruction. However, parents also would be given state dollars as vouchers to purchase elective instruction from a provider of their choice, including the district.

Krista Kafer is senior policy analyst for education at The Heritage Foundation. Her email address is **krista.kafer@heritage.org**.

INTERNET INFO

Richard Vedder and Joshua Hall's March 2004 report from the Texas Public Policy Foundation, "Effective, Efficient, Fair: Paying for Public Education in Texas," is available online at **http://www.texaspolicy.com/pdf/2004-02-25-vedderhall-all.pdf**.

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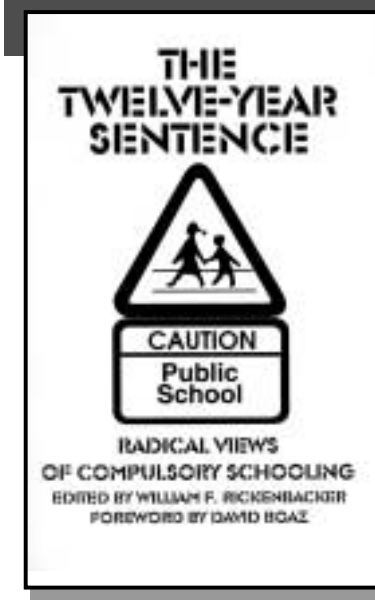

Compulsory schooling has come under increasing fire from the educationalists themselves and from outside critics. From one end of the country to the other, the subject of schooling gives rise to bitter and endless controversy. These six papers give a better understanding of the origins of compulsory education and the alternatives available to parents.

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Fuller and Hanushek Win Awards for Educational Excellence

On February 10 in Washington DC, the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation awarded the second annual Fordham Prizes for Excellence in Education to Howard L. Fuller and Eric A. Hanushek, for valor and for distinguished scholarship respectively. The prizes are for $25,000 each.

The Prize for Valor is awarded to a leader who has made major contributions to education reform through noteworthy accomplishments at the national, state, local, and/or school levels. Fuller is distinguished professor of education and founder/director of the Institute for the Transformation of Learning at Marquette University in Milwaukee. Over the past two decades, he has become one of the nation's most outspoken and effective advocates of educational choice. His efforts have helped bring a wide range of educational choices to parents in Milwaukee, and his work in establishing the Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO) promises to do the same for parents nationwide.

The Prize for Distinguished Scholarship is given to a scholar who has made major contributions to education reform via research, analysis, and successful engagement in the war of ideas. Hanushek is the Paul & Jean Hanna Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. Although he was dismissed as a "misled" economist in his early career for applying economic principles to education research, his findings have repeatedly refuted the education establishment's belief that government can invest its way out of the education achievement problem. His analysis of education through the lens of econometrics is now an accepted approach in education reform.

Howard Fuller

Eric Hanushek

INTERNET INFO

Further information about this year's prizewinners, together with the procedure for nominating candidates for next year's prizes, is available online at the Fordham Foundation's Web site at **http://www.edexcellence.net/foundation/global/page.cfm?id=199**.

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How Teachers Are Paid: The Salary Grid

One size fits all

by George A. Clowes

Although teacher pay varies by state and by school district, virtually all public schools in the U.S. employ a rigid salary grid to determine the teacher salaries paid in a specific district. This single, unified salary schedule recognizes only years of service and amount of education as inputs in determining the pay of individual teachers. It treats all degrees as equivalent, regardless of where they were earned or in what subject, and it takes no account of a teacher's effect on student achievement or the grade level taught.

The salary schedule is simply a grid of rows and columns, with the rows down the side being increasing years of service, called "steps," and the columns across the top being increasing education credentials—bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctorate, with intermediate steps to recognize the accumulation of continuing education credits from professional development.

A typical teacher salary schedule is shown below in Table 1. Table 2 shows all the salaries in the grid indexed to the starting salary in step 1 for a teacher with a bachelor's degree.

A new teacher with a bachelor's degree would start at the salary provided in step 1 under BA, or $32,722 for the nine-month school year, including a 4 percent contribution to the Teachers Retirement System. In the second year, the teacher would move into step 2 and be paid a salary of $33,357, or 1.019 times the starting salary.

As additional years of service are accumulated, the teacher moves into higher and higher steps, each of which brings an automatic annual pay increase of approximately 3 percent. However, for a teacher with just a bachelor's degree, this particular district's salary schedule caps teacher pay in step 12 to 1.373 times the starting salary, or $44,916 per school year.

If the teacher earns a master's degree by the 12th year of service, that added education credential shifts the teacher to another salary step ladder with higher pay. With a master's degree instead of a bachelor's degree, a teacher in step 12 would be paid 1.564 times the starting salary instead of 1.373 times, or $51,192 rather than $44,916. The other benefit of having the master's degree is that salary step increases are no longer capped in year 12, but continue to increase to $69,859 in the 25th year of service, or 2.135 times the starting salary.

"Dolts get paid the same as superior teachers, and PE teachers are paid the same as physics teachers."

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO ECONOMICS PROFESSOR JOHN T. WENDERS

If the teacher subsequently earns another 30 education credits beyond the master's degree, this again shifts the teacher to another salary step ladder with even higher pay. The added credential boosts the teacher's pay in step 12 to $53,238, or 1.627 times the starting salary. After 25 years of service, the teacher's pay would increase to $79,318, or 2.424 times the starting salary.

The grid makes teacher salary administration quite simple: A teacher's pay is not a matter of merit but simply a matter of where the teacher is in the grid. Budget projections are quite simple, too, since they involve simply adding up what the grid says the existing teaching staff will be paid in each of the next few years. It's also simple to compute the cost of raising starting salaries, since all salaries must be raised by the same percentage as the starting salary.

However, as University of Idaho economics professor John T. Wenders points out, the use of a unified salary schedule to determine the pay of teachers—regardless of how well or what they teach—has a number of serious disincentive effects. The most important effect is on teacher quality.

"Dolts get paid the same as superior teachers, and PE teachers are paid the same as physics teachers," says Wenders.

The result of this one-size-fits-all pay structure, he points out, is an artificial shortage of math and science teachers, whose expertise is in demand in the overall economy. It also results in a surplus of phys ed and social science teachers, who often end up teaching math and science. Not surprisingly, the performance of U.S. students in math and science is among the lowest in the world.

Research on teacher quality, notes Wenders, shows student performance is overwhelmingly a function of three factors:

- teacher cognitive ability, or brains;
- experience for the first few years of teaching; and,
- at the secondary level, possession of a master's degree in one's teaching subject.

Rather than rewarding teacher quality, the salary grid simply rewards teacher experience and education—in effect, telling teachers not to be concerned about student performance but to acquire additional educational credits for higher pay.

"One could not consciously design a policy with worse incentives for attracting and keeping good talent and performance," concludes Wenders.

He suggests the salary grid remains popular for three reasons:

- For teachers, the grid provides automatic annual salary increases with no performance reviews, no salary negotiations, and no newspaper headlines reporting increased teacher pay;
- For union leaders and school administrators, the grid is easy to administer and relieves them of the burden of justifying salary differentials based on merit and subject taught;
- For school boards, the grid allows them to give almost all teachers automatic annual salary increases out of sight of the public and the media.

"Unlike in the marketplace," notes Wenders, "the taxpayers who are paying the bill, and the parents whose children are being educated, are out of this loop."

George A. Clowes is managing editor of School Reform News. *His email address is* **clowes@heartland.org**.

INTERNET INFO

Further details of the teachers's salary grid are available from John T. Wenders' 2002 article, "The Economic Effects of the Teachers' Unified Salary Schedule," in *Government Union Review*, Volume 20 Number 3, available online at **http://www.psrf.org/gur/gur20.3wenders.jsp**.

EXAMPLE OF A K-8 TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE

TABLE 1: 2002-03 SALARY GRID FOR A SUBURBAN ILINOIS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Step	BA	BA+15	BA+30	MA	MA+15	MA+30
1	$32,722	$33,256	$34,918	$37,712	$39,597	$41,577
2	$33,357	$34,072	$35,617	$38,655	$40,389	$42,409
3	$34,441	$34,976	$36,329	$39,621	$41,197	$43,257
4	$35,561	$36,375	$37,237	$40,612	$42,021	$44,122
5	$37,339	$37,739	$38,168	$41,627	$43,072	$45,005
6	$38,739	$39,155	$39,965	$42,668	$44,148	$45,983
7	$40,192	$40,623	$41,184	$43,734	$45,252	$47,054
8	$41,297	$42,146	$42,728	$44,828	$46,383	$48,231
9	$42,432	$43,727	$44,330	$46,509	$47,543	$49,436
10	$43,599	$44,929	$45,993	$48,020	$48,732	$50,672
11	$44,471	$46,165	$47,717	$49,581	$50,194	$51,939
12	$44,916	$47,434	$49,268	$51,192	$52,076	$53,238
13	$44,916	$48,739	$50,623	$52,856	$54,029	$54,835
14	$44,916	$49,713	$52,015	$54,574	$56,055	$56,891
15	$44,916	$50,708	$53,446	$56,211	$58,157	$59,025
16	$44,916	$51,323	$54,915	$57,757	$60,338	$61,238
17	$44,916	$51,420	$56,426	$59,345	$62,299	$63,534
18	$44,916	$51,420	$57,554	$60,977	$64,012	$65,599
19	$44,916	$51,420	$58,130	$62,654	$65,772	$67,403
20	$44,916	$51,420	$58,711	$64,377	$67,581	$69,257
21	$44,916	$51,420	$58,711	$66,147	$69,439	$71,161
22	$44,916	$51,420	$58,711	$67,470	$71,349	$73,118
23	$44,916	$51,420	$58,711	$68,482	$73,311	$75,129
24	$44,916	$51,420	$58,711	$69,167	$74,777	$77,195
25	$44,916	$51,420	$58,711	$69,859	$76,273	$79,318

TABLE 2: SALARY INDEX

Step	BA	BA+15	BA+30	MA	MA+15	MA+30
1	1.000	1.016	1.067	1.152	1.210	1.271
2	1.019	1.041	1.088	1.181	1.234	1.296
3	1.053	1.069	1.110	1.211	1.259	1.322
4	1.087	1.112	1.138	1.241	1.284	1.348
5	1.141	1.153	1.166	1.272	1.316	1.375
6	1.184	1.197	1.221	1.304	1.349	1.405
7	1.228	1.241	1.259	1.337	1.383	1.438
8	1.262	1.288	1.306	1.370	1.417	1.474
9	1.297	1.336	1.355	1.421	1.453	1.511
10	1.332	1.373	1.406	1.468	1.489	1.549
11	1.359	1.411	1.458	1.515	1.534	1.587
12	1.373	1.450	1.506	1.564	1.591	1.627
13	1.373	1.489	1.547	1.615	1.651	1.676
14	1.373	1.519	1.590	1.668	1.713	1.739
15	1.373	1.550	1.633	1.718	1.777	1.804
16	1.373	1.568	1.678	1.765	1.844	1.871
17	1.373	1.571	1.724	1.814	1.904	1.942
18	1.373	1.571	1.759	1.863	1.956	2.005
19	1.373	1.571	1.776	1.915	2.010	2.060
20	1.373	1.571	1.794	1.967	2.065	2.117
21	1.373	1.571	1.794	2.021	2.122	2.175
22	1.373	1.571	1.794	2.062	2.180	2.235
23	1.373	1.571	1.794	2.093	2.240	2.296
24	1.373	1.571	1.794	2.114	2.285	2.359
25	1.373	1.571	1.794	2.135	2.331	2.424

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JUST THE FACTS:

Teacher Salaries and Education Spending

by George A. Clowes

Total spending on public K-12 education reached $437.0 billion in the 2002-03 school year—more than $9,100 per pupil nationwide. Less than a third of this money ended up in the paychecks of teachers, whose average salary was $45,930 in 2002-03, up 3.2 percent from the average salary of $44,999 reported last year for 2001-02. With spending of $16,740 per pupil, the District of Columbia had the nation's most expensive public school system.

These and other data on public schools are derived from the latest update to the "Ranking and Estimates" report published annually by the Research Department of the National Education Association (NEA). A much-quoted source of national and state-level data on teacher salaries, the report also provides statistics on state-by-state student enrollments, student-teacher ratios, and total expenditures on public K-12 education.

According to the NEA supplemental report for the school year 2002-03, published last fall, public school enrollments were up less than 1 percent to 47,789,062, while the number of teachers rose about 2 percent to 3,039,831. The student-teacher ratio fell about 2 percent from 16.0 reported in the previous supplement to 15.7 in 2002-03. Total expenditures on education, including capital and interest, rose by about 5 percent from the $413.0 billion reported in the 2002 supplement.

While NEA Research reports teacher salaries and other statistics in rank order by state, in the table on this page *School Reform News* puts these data in context by reporting them as percentages of the national average. For example, California teachers are paid 123 percent of the national average, while South Dakota teachers are paid 71 percent of the national average.

To place spending on teacher salaries in the context of total expenditures, each state's teacher salaries were multiplied by the number of teachers to produce an estimate of state-level expenditures on teachers. When reported as a percentage of total expenditures, those figures show most states spend less than a third of education funds on teachers, with only Virginia (48 percent), North Dakota (47 percent), and Rhode Island (42 percent) being notable exceptions. By contrast, in the District of Columbia, only one out of five education dollars (21 percent) is spent on teacher salaries.

George A. Clowes is managing editor of School Reform News. *His email address is* **clowes@heartland.org**.

INTERNET INFO

The Fall 2003 Update of the National Education Association's "Rankings and Estimates" report is available online at **http://www.nea.org/edstats/03rankingsupdate.html**.
The previous full report is available at **http://www.nea.org/edstats/images/03rankings.pdf**.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2002-03: Teacher Salaries, Student-Teacher Ratios, and Per-Pupil Spending

					As a % of U.S. Total Value				Teacher Salary Expenditures (#Teachers x Avg. Teacher Salary)	
AVERAGE TEACHER SALARY	STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO	TOTAL EXPENDITURE PER PUPIL	$/PUPIL RANK	STATE	AVERAGE TEACHER SALARY	STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO	TOTAL EXPENDITURE PER PUPIL	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	TEACHER SALARY EXPENDITURES	AS A % OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES
$45,930	15.7	$9,142		UNITED STATES	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	$436,981,627	$139,619,438	32.0%
$38,246	15.5	$6,811	46	ALABAMA	83.3%	98.7%	74.5%	$4,915,090	$1,780,313	36.2%
$49,685	16.7	$10,338	13	ALASKA	108.2%	106.4%	113.1%	$1,388,990	$400,064	28.8%
$40,894	20.9	$6,418	48	ARIZONA	89.0%	133.1%	70.2%	$6,036,093	$1,844,401	30.6%
$37,753	14.0	$7,157	42	ARKANSAS	82.2%	89.2%	78.3%	$3,186,356	$1,199,451	37.6%
$56,283	20.7	$8,448	29	CALIFORNIA	122.5%	131.8%	92.4%	$52,754,038	$16,941,915	32.1%
$42,679	16.6	$8,973	23	COLORADO	92.9%	105.7%	98.1%	$6,746,222	$1,936,517	28.7%
$55,367	13.2	$12,564	3	CONNECTICUT	120.5%	84.1%	137.4%	$7,185,300	$2,393,183	33.3%
$50,772	15.2	$11,651	4	DELAWARE	110.5%	96.8%	127.4%	$1,354,662	$388,964	28.7%
$40,281	18.0	$8,084	36	FLORIDA	87.7%	114.6%	88.4%	$20,480,627	$5,680,749	27.7%
$45,533	15.6	$9,436	19	GEORGIA	99.1%	99.4%	103.2%	$14,116,034	$4,365,476	30.9%
$44,464	16.5	$8,144	33	HAWAII	96.8%	105.1%	89.1%	$1,497,088	$495,951	33.1%
$40,148	17.9	$6,841	45	IDAHO	87.4%	114.0%	74.8%	$1,700,000	$555,970	32.7%
$51,289	15.5	$11,269	8	ILLINOIS	111.7%	98.7%	123.3%	$23,548,725	$6,899,345	29.3%
$45,097	16.4	$10,138	17	INDIANA	98.2%	104.5%	110.9%	$10,089,554	$2,730,263	27.1%
$39,059	14.0	$8,128	34	IOWA	85.0%	89.2%	88.9%	$3,919,245	$1,350,074	34.4%
$38,123	14.4	$8,488	28	KANSAS	83.0%	91.7%	92.8%	$3,986,147	$1,242,085	31.2%
$38,981	16.2	$7,896	37	KENTUCKY	84.9%	103.2%	86.4%	$4,966,732	$1,510,709	30.4%
$37,300	14.5	$7,767	39	LOUISIANA	81.2%	92.4%	85.0%	$5,665,853	$1,877,682	33.1%
$38,518	12.8	$10,199	15	MAINE	83.9%	81.5%	111.6%	$2,084,023	$617,020	29.6%
$49,677	15.6	$9,180	21	MARYLAND	108.2%	99.4%	100.4%	$7,956,674	$2,759,210	34.7%
$52,043	13.8	$11,393	6	MASSACHUSETTS	113.3%	87.9%	124.6%	$11,256,083	$3,736,687	33.2%
$53,798	17.1	$10,160	16	MICHIGAN	117.1%	108.9%	111.1%	$17,728,706	$5,489,171	31.0%
$44,745	16.1	$10,941	9	MINNESOTA	97.4%	102.5%	119.7%	$9,265,938	$2,354,034	25.4%
$34,555	16.1	$6,586	47	MISSISSIPPI	75.2%	102.5%	72.0%	$3,237,942	$1,056,312	32.6%
$39,292	13.5	$8,269	32	MISSOURI	85.5%	86.0%	90.4%	$7,392,658	$2,601,680	35.2%
$35,754	14.5	$7,818	38	MONTANA	77.8%	92.4%	85.5%	$1,172,718	$370,483	31.6%
$37,896	13.7	$8,092	35	NEBRASKA	82.5%	87.3%	88.5%	$2,297,595	$784,788	34.2%
$41,795	19.0	$8,496	27	NEVADA	91.0%	121.0%	92.9%	$3,139,398	$813,289	25.9%
$41,909	13.9	$9,166	22	NEW HAMPSHIRE	91.2%	88.5%	100.3%	$1,903,090	$627,587	33.0%
$54,158	13.0	$11,604	5	NEW JERSEY	117.9%	82.8%	126.9%	$15,865,410	$5,709,445	36.0%
$36,965	15.2	$7,716	41	NEW MEXICO	80.5%	96.8%	84.4%	$2,469,418	$776,967	31.5%
$52,600	12.6	$12,957	2	NEW YORK	114.5%	80.3%	141.7%	$36,863,831	$11,887,600	32.2%
$43,076	15.6	$7,744	40	NORTH CAROLINA	93.8%	99.4%	84.7%	$10,421,985	$3,710,093	35.6%
$33,210	13.3	$5,313	51	NORTH DAKOTA	72.3%	84.7%	58.1%	$547,340	$257,211	47.0%
$45,498	14.8	$8,672	26	OHIO	99.1%	94.3%	94.9%	$15,725,403	$5,557,353	35.3%
$34,877	15.4	$7,022	44	OKLAHOMA	75.9%	98.1%	76.8%	$4,382,849	$1,416,355	32.3%
$47,600	20.4	$8,417	30	OREGON	103.6%	129.9%	92.1%	$4,655,503	$1,291,198	27.7%
$51,424	15.2	$8,760	25	PENNSYLVANIA	112.0%	96.8%	95.8%	$15,915,365	$6,132,621	38.5%
$51,076	11.8	$10,348	12	RHODE ISLAND	111.2%	75.2%	113.2%	$1,634,883	$682,988	41.8%
$40,362	15.2	$9,260	20	SOUTH CAROLINA	87.9%	96.8%	101.3%	$6,224,918	$1,781,458	28.6%
$32,416	13.9	$8,285	31	SOUTH DAKOTA	70.6%	88.5%	90.6%	$1,035,474	$292,327	28.2%
$39,677	15.6	$6,386	49	TENNESSEE	86.4%	99.4%	69.8%	$5,813,353	$2,313,764	39.8%
$40,001	14.6	$8,895	24	TEXAS	87.1%	93.0%	97.3%	$37,565,997	$11,587,490	30.8%
$38,385	22.3	$6,112	50	UTAH	83.6%	142.0%	66.9%	$2,940,915	$827,657	28.1%
$41,491	11.4	$11,346	7	VERMONT	90.3%	72.6%	124.1%	$1,130,723	$363,212	32.1%
$43,152	12.6	$7,082	43	VIRGINIA	94.0%	80.3%	77.5%	$8,332,713	$4,016,113	48.2%
$44,963	19.2	$10,258	14	WASHINGTON	97.9%	122.3%	112.2%	$10,421,726	$2,384,613	22.9%
$38,481	14.1	$9,530	18	WEST VIRGINIA	83.8%	89.8%	104.2%	$2,683,594	$767,465	28.6%
$42,775	14.7	$10,605	10	WISCONSIN	93.1%	93.6%	116.0%	$9,345,333	$2,565,987	27.5%
$38,838	13.3	$10,486	11	WYOMING	84.6%	84.7%	114.7%	$903,000	$252,059	27.9%
$50,763	14.2	$16,740	1	DISTRICT OF COL	110.5%	90.4%	183.1%	$1,130,312	$242,089	21.4%

FOOTNOTES:
Computed from NEA Research, Estimates databank.
Source for raw data: National Education Association, "Rankings & Estimates" Fall 2003 Update published November 2003. **http://www.nea.org/edstats/03rankingsupdate.html**

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